DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 409 745 FL 801 171

AUTHOR	Hart, Doug; Cumming, Alister
TITLE	A Follow-Up Study of People in Ontario Completing Level 3 of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program. Report to the Ontario Region LINC Advisory Committee.
INSTITUTION	Ontario Inst. for Studies in Education, Toronto.; Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa (Ontario).
PUB DATE	Jan 97
NOTE	128p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Achievement Gains; Adult Education; Arabic; Chinese; Educational Background; Employment Patterns; *English (Second Language); Followup Studies; Foreign Countries; *Immigrants; Interviews; *Language Role; Language Usage; *Limited English Speaking; Literacy; *Literacy Education; Polish; Program Evaluation; Relevance (Education); Second Language Instruction; Somali; Spanish; *Student Characteristics; Student Educational Objectives; Surveys; Tamil; Uncommonly Taught Languages; Vocational English (Second Language)
IDENTIFIERS	Canada; *Ontario

ABSTRACT

The report details results of a survey of students who had completed Level 3 of the Ontario (Canada) Language Instruction fore Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program. The initial followup study included 103 native speakers of Arabic, 208 speakers of Cantonese, 198 of Polish, 40 of Somali, 155 of Spanish, and 196 of Tamil. Ten from each group except Somali-speakers were later interviewed by telephone, in their native languages. The study and its objectives are described, and results are reported in these areas: demographic characteristics of LINC groups; recent education and work history; patterns of English usage in daily activities; difficulties in using English in daily activities, including government services and social activities; literacy development patterns and usage; perceptions of benefits gained from program participation; and perceptions of progress and barriers in English usage. Recommendations for program improvement are outlined. The format and forms for the telephone interview are appended. Contains 31 references. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)

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ED 409 745

A Follow-Up Study of People In Ontario Completing Level 3 of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program

Report to the Ontario Region LINC Advisory Committee

January 1997

by

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This project was funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Settlement Directorate, Ontario Region in conjunction with the Ontario Region LINC Advisory Committee under contract to the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. The report represents the views and interpretations of its authors, not the policies of Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

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Executive Summary

This report documents a follow-up survey of graduates from LINC level 3 in Ontario in 1995 and early 1996, aiming to describe -- after they had completed LINC level 3 -- how well they had adapted to Ontario, what they had done after LINC programs, what barriers they faced, what helped them, and what could have helped them. Short telephone interviews were conducted between August and November, 1966 in the mother tongues of representative samples of 6 different ethnolinguistic groups: 103 speakers of Arabic, 208 speakers of Cantonese, 198 speakers of Polish, 40 speakers of Somali, 155 speakers of Spanish, and 196 speakers of Tamil. Fifty of these people (10 from each group, except Somalis) then participated in further in-depth interviews by telephone in their native languages.

The main findings of the follow-up study are:

Social Characteristics of LINC graduates

- The majority of LINC level 3 graduates are women, across all six language groups.
- There are substantial variations in the educational profiles of LINC graduates from different language groups.

Recent Educational and Work History

- The proportion of graduates working or looking for work in the three months prior to the survey varies across language groups from a third to almost two-thirds.
- Employment rates at the time of the survey varied about 15 to 40 percent.
- 40-60 percent of LINC graduates, depending on language group, had taken an educational program in the past three months.
- Two-thirds of those who reported an educational program (one-third of the sample overall) had taken ESL or language programs, alone or in conjunction with other education and training.

Uses of English

- Graduates from different language groups have very different profiles regarding use of English in everyday activities. Polar examples are Cantonese and Somali. Cantonese LINC graduates typically shop, obtain medical services and read daily newspapers all in their first language; Somali graduates typically do all of these activities in English.
- Graduates from all language groups mainly use English, without the benefit of interpreters, in dealing with staff at social and government agencies.
- With the exception of Somalis (and Spanish for print media), most graduates across groups are able to access weekly print and broadcast media in their first languages.

- With the exception of Somalis, half or more of graduates across language groups access English language print media at least weekly. Majorities of all groups access English language broadcast media daily.

- The overwhelming majority of graduates do not attend community or religious gatherings, and do not participate in hobby clubs, sports teams or cultural organizations where communication is in English. Participation rates are generally low even where these activities are conducted in graduates' first language.

Difficulties in Using English

- Overall, there is little relationship between how frequently graduates use English in everyday activities and the frequency with which using English causes them difficulties in communicating. This is the case whether we examine group differences or correlate individual responses.

- The circumstances of Somali graduates are an exception to the above. Collectively graduates are highly exposed to using English in everyday life and they frequently report difficulties caused by using English to communicate.

- For each of the activities specified in our short interview, substantial proportions (30 percent or more) of graduates across most language groups indicate that they have no difficulty communicating in English.

Literacy

- Among those who had been employed within the past three months, use of reading skills in English varied substantially between and within groups. Patterns indicate a polarization between jobs which do not require reading, and those for which reading is a regular activity.

- Graduates in language groups reporting more frequent use of reading skills at work less frequently reported having difficulty reading in English on the job. The proportion of graduates reporting no difficulty with reading skills varies substantially, from about 20 to 60 percent across language groups.

- Use of literacy skills in job-search activities varies widely across language groups. In large part this reflects differences in exposure to or apparent necessity of using English. Thus use of English to read job ads is high among groups without easy access to print media in their first language.

- The proportion of LINC graduates reporting no difficulty with reading skills varies substantially, from about 20 to 60 percent across language groups. Overall there is little relationship between the extent graduates in each language group who use literacy skills and the extent to which they report difficulties.

- Majorities of graduates taking educational programs reported having difficulties at least sometimes in coping with reading materials.

- In both labour market and educational domains, Arabic and Somali graduates were more likely to report difficulties in using literacy skills.

Impact of the LINC Program

- Most graduates had positive views of the benefits overall they had gained from the LINC program; in most language groups large majorities of graduates thought the program had benefitted them 'a lot'.

- With regard to the benefits of the program for undertaking specific activities, the majority of assessments are generally positive. The main exception is lower ratings by Cantonese graduates generally across activities, and ratings overall regarding accessing social and government agencies (which reflect differences in views between those who use these agencies and those who do not).

- Findings emphasize the value of functionally-oriented language teaching in LINC programs (i.e., for purposes of societal contact, obtaining goods and services, etc.).

Progress and Barriers

- A majority of LINC graduates in all language groups except Cantonese indicated that they had made a lot of progress in reaching their personal goals. The future goals mostly involve finding satisfying full-time employment, developing fluency in English, and raising families successfully.

- Inadequate proficiency in English remains a major barrier to graduates in achieving their personal goals. This is evidenced both by comments from the in-depth interviews and by the proportion of respondents who have recently undertaken further language training following graduation from LINC level 3.

- Many respondents indicated they could have been helped in their adaptation to Canada by further studies in English, training or retraining focused on specific job skills, and access to interpreters in certain activities.

1. Introduction

In its initial years of operation the LINC Program has dramatically changed ESL program offerings for adults throughout much of Canada and particularly in Ontario. The present state of delivery for LINC through a variety of locally-based service providers differs markedly from the state of adult language training in Canada documented as recently as 1991 by the Canada Employment and Immigrant Advisory Council. The current provision of LINC services is documented in the reports of service providers, but the benefits and impact of the program for its graduates are not known beyond anecdotal or informal reports. This lack of information was evident, for example, in a survey of community-based agencies serving immigrants conducted by the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI) between December 1992 and January 1993, which suggested that LINC level 3 may not represent an adequate level of English language proficiency for integration into Canadian society, or, in the view of some, even further work-training programs. The views of service providers of LINC certainly merit very careful attention, but only a follow-up study of LINC level 3 graduates can provide definitive information on this and other issues concerning the impact of the program on successful participants.

LINC now functions as the major federally-sponsored program for English language training and cultural orientation for adult immigrants to Canada, operating throughout the English-speaking provinces (i.e., not Quebec, where other programs operate). LINC programs are offered by a wide range of service-providers, including colleges, school boards, private language schools, and diverse immigrant-serving agencies. The program is typically structured into levels of proficiency in English, with level 1 representing the most basic, limited proficiency in English, and level 3 a minimal communicative competence with simple interactions and texts in English.

Objectives of the Present Study

In the autumn of 1995 Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in conjunction with the Ontario Region LINC Advisory Committee (ORLAC), contracted with a research team at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) to conduct a follow-up survey of graduates of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program at level 3. The request for proposals for the survey outlined the objectives as follows:

To follow-up on a representative sample of LINC learners who have completed level 3, to determine:

- How well have they integrated/adapted to Canadian society and been able to pursue their personal goals in terms of access to i) community/social participation, ii) education and training, iii) jobs and iv) services?
- Where did they go? (i.e., jobs, further training)
- What barriers did they face?
- What helped them? (i.e., services, previous training, etc.)
- What could have helped them?

The follow-up study took the form of a large-scale telephone survey conducted with a representative sample of about 900 graduates in six language groups: Arabic, Cantonese, Polish, Spanish, Somali and Tamil. A small number of respondents to this survey (10 in each language group, excluding Somali) subsequently participated in in-depth interviews, also conducted by telephone.

The following is a report of this research. This was an independent, contracted study in that the researchers have no direct involvement in the delivery of LINC programs, though all members of the research team have had extensive experience with ESL education in Canada, and research on this topic. We emphasize that the purpose of the study was to document the experiences of LINC 3 graduates in certain key areas. The study was not intended to evaluate the performance of specific LINC service providers, although some incidental information about respondents' impressions of LINC was gathered in the process of the research, as a necessary basis for describing these people's processes of adaptation to Ontario. But these descriptions of LINC should not be interpreted as evaluations of LINC programs because they are not matched systematically to specific LINC service providers. Moreover, the interview schedules did not include items asking respondents to evaluate the particular LINC programs in which they had participated. As a consequence, this report does not make recommendations about improving LINC programs, nor could the scope of the inquiry allow us to do so in a specific way. The value of the study is primarily descriptive, documenting what people who have completed LINC level 3 have done, and not done, after completing the program. This descriptive information does provide useful information that should help to guide LINC programming in the future: indicating how LINC has functioned in conjunction with the adaptation of the specific ethnolinguistic populations surveyed and their interactions with current societal

conditions in Ontario. Both service providers and individual graduates provided information to the researchers under conditions of strict confidentiality.

Organization of the Report

This report is organized in nine sections. Section 2 describes the methodology of the study, including the interview schedules, interviewing methods, and selection of respondents. This section discusses the representativeness of the sample of LINC graduates who participated in the follow-up study. Sections 3 to 8 summarize results of the large-scale, short interview survey. These sections cover the following topics: characteristics of LINC graduates, recent labour force and educational participation, use of English in everyday life (including use of mass media), difficulties encountered in using English, uses of literacy skills, and the impact of the LINC program on everyday life activities. Section 9 synthesizes the information provided by the in-depth interviews.

Quantitative information is provided in the form of Tables showing results by language group. This is in keeping with the design of the study, which specified inclusion of quotas of particular language groups. The sample was not designed to represent LINC level 3 graduates as a whole. Sections 3, 4 and 8 present a large amount of information, which we have tried to make more accessible through the use of bar charts to summarize key findings. All information offered in these charts is also available in more detail from the tables in each section.

2. Research Design and Methods

The research questions designated by ORLAC required our gathering information on the perceptions and experiences of a large, representative sample of LINC graduates. This necessitated survey research. The questions, however, required a greater depth of understanding than could be obtained from a short, standardized questionnaire of pre-coded questions. The strategy we adopted was to survey a large number of recent LINC level 3 graduates, using an adaptive questionnaire of mainly closed-ended items, administered by telephone in the people's first languages, followed by in-depth, semi-structured interviews with a small subsample of respondents to the initial telephone survey.

Below we briefly summarize the design and methods of the study, including our review of previous research, involvement of research team members representing particular language communities, the development and refinement of interview schedules, administrative procedures, and sampling and representativeness.

Relevant Prior Research

Nearly every person writing seriously on the topic of language education and immigrant settlement has emphasized the importance of longitudinal research and follow-up studies to assess accurately the impact of educational programs on learners' adaptation to a host society. But only a handful of previous studies have taken this challenge on, most only in case study fashion with a very small number of people. The two primary reasons for this are (1) the complexity and costs of conducting valid, longitudinal or follow-up surveys and (2) a lack of theories that are able to define and distinguish, precisely and comprehensively, the variables that contribute to successful immigrant settlement. Nonetheless, a number of previous publications do exist that help to indicate key parameters for the present research and to suggest the importance of designing such a study carefully so that it can form a valid and reliable basis to guide future LINC programming in Ontario and elsewhere.

Reviews of research on adult immigrant settlement in Canada (e.g., Thomas, 1990) or related societies such as the U.S. (e.g., Ramirez, 1994) have stressed how a multiplicity of complex, variable factors form the conditions that may help or hinder recent immigrants' settlement. Theorists of education, likewise, have attempted to explain the variable performance of differing ethnic groups of immigrants, finding a diversity of factors, both within educational programs and the broader society, that determine successful cultural adaptation (Jacob & Jordan, 1987; Hornberger, 1989) or shape it uniquely for specific populations (e.g. in Canada, Cumming & Gill, 1992; Klassen, 1992; or in the U.S., Gibson, 1988; Ogbu, 1991). Ideally, a single model of education, society, and cultural adaptation would be necessary to define the key processes and elements that pose "barriers" or make "accessible" immigrant settlement, but unfortunately no generally agreed-upon model exists.

Nevertheless, some obvious factors bearing on the present study are well-documented in previous research on the adaptation of immigrants during or after educational programs: for example, gender (Cumming &

Gill, 1992; Peirce, 1995), ethnicity (Driessen, 1993; Gibson, 1988; Ogbu, 1991; Trueba, Jacobs & Kirten, 1990), employment opportunities sought or obtained and the feasibility of obtaining them locally (Cumming, Lee & Oreopoulos, 1989; Mastai, 1980; Mellow, 1992), and previous education and literacy (Klassen, 1992; Macias, 1994; Statistics Canada, 1996, pp. 33-36). Our survey attempted to account for each of these factors systematically, both in our sampling design and in the content of our questionnaire items.

Similarly well-attested in previous research is the importance and difficulty of designing studies that can make valid inferences about populations of adult immigrants with limited English proficiency that are hard to locate (or even define conceptually) and that may vary among themselves or differ in their socio-geographic circumstances (e.g., in Canada, Canada Employment and Immigration Advisory Council, 1991; Cumming, 1991; Jones, 1992; or in the U.S., Macias, 1993). We are not aware of any previous follow-up studies of participants from adult language programs in Canada, though some studies have been conducted in the United States with certain refugee populations (e.g., Short & Johnson, 1988, for refugees from Eastern Europe who had taken Cultural Orientation training; DiMeo & Somach, 1996, for Bosnian refugees who had received cultural orientation through the Catholic Migration Commission; Tollefson, 1985). Cumming (1991) surveyed needs for adult ESL instruction throughout British Columbia. Such studies helped to establish some of the parameters that needed to be considered in the present study. As these studies have demonstrated, considerable effort, expense and expertise need to be invested into such inquiry so as to be certain that specific ethnic populations and their characteristics are defined precisely, survey instruments and procedures are appropriate and reliable, and results can be analyzed meaningfully and without misrepresentations.

An important conceptualization--implicit in the research questions phrased by ORLAC and in much previous sociolinguistic research--is to view the activities of multilingual populations in reference to key societal domains (Fishman, Cooper & Ma, 1971; Frideres, 1989; Wagner, Messick & Spratt, 1986) or social networks (Fingeret, 1983), and to expect different uses of specific languages and levels of adaptation within such domains or networks. Adopting this perspective, our survey aimed to document the interpersonal interactions that respondents said they had in their daily lives in such key domains (documented in previous research) as obtaining commercial goods and services; government, health, and legal services; access to educational and training programs; jobs; and access to religious, community, and

leisure activities. This conceptualization provided a basis to define indicators of the extent to which LINC graduates had adapted to these key societal domains in Ontario, along with documentation of their uses of English and their mother tongues in these domains, and respondents' perceptions of the factors they believe facilitated or constrained their participation in these domains.

Local Input: Roles of the Advisory Committee and Research Team Members from Relevant Language Communities

The current study was designed, in large part, based on our own prior experience and on the experience of others who have done similar projects. However, both the content of what we investigated and the instruments we employed were shaped by expert and local knowledge arising from our advisory committee and, importantly, through extensive input from the research assistants on the project team who represented the ethnolinguistic communities involved in the study.

(i) The Advisory Committee

As stipulated in ORLAC's request for proposals, we established an advisory committee for the study early on. The committee included two university-based social researchers, including Professor Carl Amrhein, a representative of the newly established Centre of Excellence in Immigrant Settlement at the University of Toronto, and Chair of the Department of Geography, as well as Professor Tara Goldstein of the Faculty of Education at the University of Toronto, who has worked on various aspects of immigrant settlement issues for the province of Ontario; an immigrant settlement worker, Eleanor Adamowski of Hungarian House; a graduate of LINC level 3, Franjo Sincur; and a representative designated by TESL Ontario who is a LINC program instructor, Lourdes Suidua of the North York Board of Education. Members of the Advisory Committee have reviewed and commented on: our initial proposal and it research plan, a prototype draft of our survey instrument (which we subsequently split into the short and long interview forms), and a draft version of the present report.

(ii) Representation of the Language Communities--Graduate Research Assistants

In addition to the principal investigators, Alister Cumming and Doug Hart, the team for the study

consisted of seven research assistants, one each from the six language communities included in the survey: Margarita De Antunano (a Spanish-speaker, originally from Mexico), Abdirashid Khalif Hashi (a Somali-speaker, originally from Somalia), Agata Hibner-Bialobrzeska (a Polish-speaker, originally from Poland), Geetha Natarajan (a Tamil-speaker, originally from India), Rabia Redouane (an Arabic-speaker, originally from Morocco), and Anthony Tong (a Cantonese-speaker, originally from Hong Kong). An additional research assistant, Nuzhat Amin (originally from Pakistan), worked on questionnaire development over the summer of 1996 as part of an OISE graduate assistantship. Six of these people are graduate students at OISE/UT specializing in second language education; the seventh is a student of Political Science at the University of Toronto. All are themselves immigrants to Canada and each has worked extensively in language education in Canada as well as in their countries of origin.

The research assistants participated in a series of meetings over the duration of the research in which we collectively developed and revised drafts of both the short and in-depth interview schedules used in the surveys. Their insights into the languages, customs, and cultures of the of the six immigrant groups helped to ensure the appropriateness and relevance of items in the surveys to their language communities. All (but Nuzhat Amin) were involved in conducting the in-depth interviews for their respective language groups, and several also worked on the short interview survey as temporary employees of the professional polling agency doing the field work for this part of the survey. Moreover, the research assistants did translations of both the short and in-depth interview schedules, verifying the substance of these instruments through cross-translations and through pilot tests with recent immigrants they had access to as friends or relatives. Issues of cultural appropriateness and translatability were thus addressed throughout the process of preparing and revising the interview instruments. The drafting process was conducted iteratively. Successive drafts of the interview schedules were first reviewed by team members individually with special reference to their own language groups. The team was then brought together to pool issues and suggestions, and to arrive at a consensus on revisions. Similarly, results from the in-depth interviews were reviewed and summarized collectively at a joint meeting, checking for areas of commonality and differences across each of the six language groups.

The team of research assistants acted as a bridge between the research team and the language communities involved in the study. Team members were native-speakers of the languages surveyed and familiar with the experiences and cultures of the people to be interviewed in the survey. Their feedback was crucial in ensuring that the information we gathered would be valid and reliable. They were best placed to determine when questions were confusing, threatening, insulting, or simply would be understood differently from what we had intended. Moreover, they were also students familiar with social research, its disciplinary requirements, and its ethical sensitivities; and they were interested in using this opportunity as a kind of apprenticeship in further developing their personal experiences with this kind of inquiry. This approach followed the procedures utilized in Cumming's (1991) needs assessment for adult ESL in British Columbia, which likewise had employed a cadre of graduate students to develop and conduct survey interviews with ESL learners in languages such as Cantonese, Punjabi, and Spanish.

Survey Instruments

The follow-up study involved two instruments. All respondents completed a questionnaire in a structured telephone interview lasting on average, 10-12 minutes. At the end of the interview, respondents were asked whether they were willing to complete a second, in-depth interview lasting about half an hour. A small sample of the original respondents, 10 per language community, subsequently participated in the longer, semi-structured interview lasting a half hour or more.

(i) The Short Interview

The structured short interview (see Appendix 1) consisted almost exclusively of precoded questions where respondents mostly chose from a short menu of responses read to them. A small number of questions required short 'free' answers which were readily coded (e.g., for occupation or country of origin). Even with this restrictive format, the allowable interview time of 10-12 minutes placed severe constraints on the number and depth of issues which could be addressed.

The interview began with a brief explanation of the purpose of the study and the nature of the questions to be asked. Respondents were assured that participation was voluntary and that any information they provided would be held confidential. The bulk of the short interview was devoted to obtaining information on the extent of respondents' activities in a number of domains of everyday life, their uses of English in

these domains and interactions with key participants, and associated difficulties. The topics covered were, in the order presented in the interview:

- obtaining goods and services, including food, shopping, banking, housing, medical services, and dealing with social and government agencies;
- job searches and obtaining employment; communication at work, including dealing with clients/customers, supervisors, other employees, and with written materials;
- participation in educational or training programs; dealings with public school officials as a parent or guardian of a child;
- use of mass media; and
- voluntary activities, including community and religious gatherings, and participation in voluntary associations.

This section of the interview concluded with a question on how much progress respondents thought they had made toward their personal goals in coming to Canada.

Respondents were subsequently asked how much they thought completing the LINC program had helped them with each of a range of activities. The activities represented a small subset of those covered in earlier sections; they included both broadly defined functional areas such as shopping, and general, but narrowly defined, tasks such as filling out forms. Many of these items were drawn from benchmark items described in the LINC Benchmarks for Level 3 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1996).

The short interview concluded with a set of question on respondents' social backgrounds including age, family status, level of formal education, country of origin, main occupation before coming to Canada, employment status over the past three months, and educational activities over the past three months. The final question asked whether the respondents would be willing to participate in a longer, in-depth interview at a later time.

(ii) The In-depth Interview

The in-depth semi-structured interviews (see Appendix 2) gathered information on how respondents were getting on in particular domains of everyday life: obtaining services, attending educational programs, labour force participation, and finally, involvement in social, community and leisure time activities. For each domains, respondents were asked a similar series of open-ended questions. These asked them to identify specific things which had helped them make progress and or which had hindered them, what their unmet needs were, and what they thought could be helpful in improving their situations.

Following this part of the interview, respondents were asked what had been most useful to them about the LINC program and what changes they would recommend to improve the program's impact. In earlier questions respondents were asked about any difficulties in using English in each domain if they did not spontaneously comment on language use.

A very short series of close-ended questions asked respondents how frequently they currently used English on a typical day, whether they felt they were making progress in learning English, how positively or negatively they felt about using English, and what level of fluency in English they personally would ultimately be satisfied with. The interview concluded with open-ended questions about their goals for the next five years, and their views on what the main factors were which would assist or hinder them in reaching their goals.

(iii) Translations

Translations of both the short and in-depth interview schedules were done by the research assistants from the six language groups. Each translation was checked with at least one other native speaker. Translation issues formed the main topic of discussion in several meetings of the research team. Although we are confident that the different language versions of the interview instruments are essentially parallel, there was no way of rigorously testing this impression. The best evidence is in fact the level of detail involved in our collective discussions of wordings, particularly in the case of scales. An indication of the extent of the problems involved in such multiple translations is indicated by our decision to adopt one scale with a top rating of 'tremendously', a word none of us would have expected to use in this context, but a word

that proved to be the only satisfactory descriptor that the research team felt would translate adequately across all seven languages.

Administration of the Telephone Interviews

(i) Large-scale Short Interviews

We subcontracted with Forum Canada to conduct the large scale telephone survey (target N=1000) using the short interview schedule we developed at OISE. This professional polling agency has had previous experience with follow-up surveys of graduates of basic skills programs in Ontario. Their staff reviewed a preliminary draft of the questionnaire and made recommendations to us on format suitable for telephone interviewing. Interviewing was done by telephone from Toronto between August and November, 1996. Interviews were conducted in the respondent's first language unless respondents expressed a preference to be interviewed in English, using computer files for languages (e.g., Spanish, Polish) that could be transposed easily into ASCII format, and printed cue cards, cued to itemized computer files, for languages (e.g., Arabic, Cantonese, Somali, Tamil) that could not be. See Appendix 1 for the complete text of the questionnaire used and the introduction used by the interviewers.

Interviewers used a CATI (computer-assisted telephone interviewing) system. An interviewer using a CATI system sees the questionnaire as a series of computer screens. CATI systems are particularly useful for a study such as this where a respondent's answers to one question often determines the next question that will be asked, that is, a questionnaire with a lot of 'skips' to alternate sections of the instrument. CATI relieves the interviewer of keeping track of the skips and makes it easier to provide respondents with shorter, customized pathways through a larger omnibus questionnaire. CATI also eliminates the costs, potential for errors, and delays previously associated with re-entering data from handwritten forms completed by interviewers into the computer. Interview results were recorded in computer files then conveyed to the principal investigators at OISE/UT for analyses.

(ii) In-depth Interviews

We considered the CATI system less appropriate for the in-depth interviews, which were designed to gain detailed information on the experiences and impressions of a relatively small number of our original respondents. At this second stage of the survey, we used a semi-structured interview format with few

precoded items. This required a much higher level of involvement and decision making on the part of interviewers and respondents alike, as well as the recording of extensive, detailed data for each respondent. The in-depth interviews were conducted in-house by the team of research assistants using an audio-taping system for telephone interviews rather than CATI. Interviewers made notes during the course of the interviews then produced a profile of each interviewee (in English) along with selected quotations for discussion with the principal investigators and syntheses across the language groups. We did not transcribe the taped interviews but rather used them as resources in documenting, verifying, and refining the profiles.

The Sample

(i) Eligibility

The follow-up study was restricted to LINC level 3 graduates whose first language was recorded (in LINC files) as Arabic, Cantonese, Polish, Somali, Spanish or Tamil. This restriction was introduced to keep the costs of translation, piloting and interviewer training within budget as well as to focus the target populations for the survey to facilitate meaningful analyses. The six language groups were selected by ORLAC in consultation with the researchers, intending to represent ethnolinguistic groups from different parts of the world, with varying histories of settlement in Ontario, and with varying, perceived levels of successful adaptation to Canada. Although the six language groups fail to account for the full ethnic or linguistic diversity of participants in LINC in Ontario, they do include six of the nine most numerous populations participating in the program, according to LINC roll-up records for 1994-95 in Ontario (the other large populations not considered being speakers of Punjabi, Vietnamese, and Serbo-Croatian). In addition these groups include populations that are either homogeneous (e.g., Cantonese, Polish) or heterogenous (e.g., Arabic, Spanish) in terms of their countries of origins, that have tended to settle in different regions of Ontario, and that have emigrated mostly either as landed immigrants or as refugees. By focusing on these six language groups the study avoided confounding issues of ethnolinguistic diversity with those of cultural adaptation, enabling us to make some limited inferences based on contrasts between the variables listed above and ethnolinguistic populations.

The study was further restricted to those who had graduated from the program between February 1, 1995

and May 31, 1996. We sought graduates who had been out of the program long enough to have had opportunities to use their newly acquired language skills and awareness of Canada as well as to settle independently in Ontario. However, the longer people had been out of the program, the more likely it was that they would have left the address and phone number recorded with their LINC service provider, making them more difficult to locate for the survey. It may be that those who had moved from their previously recorded addresses had different experiences and characteristics from those who had not (for example, regarding employment history). Thus the further back in time we went, the less representative our sample would be of the whole cohort of graduates. The relatively broad 'window' we opted for represents a compromise between the risks of unrepresentativeness and the need to obtain a large sample of graduates. Our interviews were conducted between July and November 1996, thus producing data that ranged between 6 and 16 months after people had completed LINC Level 3.

(ii) Acquiring Lists of Eligible Graduates

Names and phone numbers of LINC 3 graduates eligible for the study were provided by A-LINC assessment centres in two regions, Metropolitan Toronto and Peel, supplemented by our contacting LINC service providers (SPOs) directly in other regions of Ontario. The role of A-LINC assessment centres is to place candidates for LINC into programs; they do not assess graduates upon completion of LINC programs. Nevertheless in the two regions of Metropolitan Toronto and Peel, the A-LINC centres had established procedures where SPOs reported which individuals referred to them had graduated from Level 3. (SPO reports to LINC regional offices provide only summary statistics.) Thus centralized lists of graduates eligible for the follow-up study were available in this manner. The Greater Toronto Area (GTA) largely covered by these two assessment centres accounts for approximately two-thirds of LINC 3 graduates eligible for the follow-up survey.[1] Although not all SPOs reported to the A-LINC centres in their respective regions, those which did represented by far the majority of eligible graduates. The Metro/York Region A-LINC Centre provided the names of 1140 eligible graduates form 41 SPOs (this count includes multiple contracts with the same umbrella agency); and an additional 164 names were provided directly by 9 SPOs. The Peel A-LINC Centre provided names of 925 eligible graduates from 23 SPOs.

[1] This estimate is based on official 'roll-up' statistics for the April 1994-March 1995 period made available by the Settlement Directorate.

The Assessment Centres received a letter explaining the objectives and sponsorship of the follow-up study, the information we needed, and the confidentiality guarantees we were offering to LINC graduates to be interviewed as well as to the SPOs. In the case of Assessment Centres we indicated our willingness to enter into partnership agreements over management of the lists of names. These arrangements proved acceptable and the Centres provided names and telephone numbers of eligible level 3 graduates.

Outside of the Toronto and Peel regions, assessment centres have not compiled information from SPOs on individual graduates from LINC. We thus had to approach each of approximately 100 currently (as of March 1996) active SPOs in search of names and phone numbers of eligible Level 3 graduates. These SPOs were sent letters similar to those received by the A-LINC centres. Where we received no response, we followed up with a telephone call. (A similar procedure was used to obtain supplementary lists in Metro Toronto.) In total, 16 SPOs submitted a total of 182 names. Several agencies indicated that they did not have Level 3 graduates; some others indicated that their policy on confidentiality of student records did not permit them to release names and numbers to us.

This situation suggests that to facilitate future research on LINC programs it would be advisable to establish a standard form asking for students' informed consent to have limited information about them released in confidential form for the purposes of research on the program. This consent would probably need to be obtained before participants in LINC enter the program. Similarly, standard record-keeping systems and databases could usefully be established for such information, though confidentiality of these data would be an issue. For future follow-up studies, a database tracking graduates from the program, for example through attempting to confirm addresses at three-month intervals, would also be helpful, along with a methodology for analyzing such information. The present study suggests directions for developing indicators of adaptation to Canada which would be appropriate for very short interviews with graduates.

(iii) Selection of Interviewees

We established a maximum quota of 200 for each language group (cognisant that this would not be reached in all cases) and an overall target sample size of 1000 (recognizing we would fall slightly short of our quotas with some language groups). These quotas were then further divided by region. Separate quotas were set for Metro Toronto, Peel and the areas not covered by these two A-LINC centres. The division of the quota of 200 for each language group among regions was based on the distributions of

graduates in each language group shown in 'roll-up' statistics provided by the Settlement Directorate. This division was only a starting point; numbers drawn from each region were adjusted as necessary to reach adequate numbers of graduates.

We had initially anticipated creating a list of eligible level 3 graduates by first drawing a sample of SPOs, stratified by region to ensure broad geographical coverage. This strategy was abandoned for two reasons. First the availability of lists of graduates from A-LINC centres covering Metro North and Peel made sampling SPOs unnecessary for a substantial proportion of the LINC level 3 graduate population. Second, in areas where we were dependent on SPOs for listings of graduates, targeted sampling was not a viable strategy in view of the low response rate to our requests for lists; we were in no position to pick and choose.[2]

In the case of the large lists provided by the two assessment centres (Metro North and Peel), we put the order of names into a random order before submitting it to the professional polling agency. This was done to ensure that all those listed had an equal chance of being contacted in the event that the polling agency reached the quota before reaching the end of the list. (The polling agency called each number in the order in which it appeared on the list, although the order of interviewing differed since very many graduates were only reached after one or more call-backs.) In fact, in most instances at least one attempt was made to contact all persons listed.

Candidates for the in-depth interview were selected from those who had indicated in the short interview that they were willing to participate. (Most respondents, in fact, indicated a willingness to do an in-depth interview.) A quota of 10 in-depth interviews per language group had been set in our proposal, primarily for budgetary reasons. We took four factors into account in making our selections: geographic location (more accurately, the geographic location of respondents' level 3 LINC program), employment status, gender balance (according to the proportion of males and females within each language group in LINC programs), and respondents' own assessment as to how much progress they had made in reaching their

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[2] Our first experience in soliciting names directly from SPOs was in Metro were we initiated this strategy before discovering the existence of the list held by the Metro A-LINC Centre. (This was not wasted effort since we received responses from several SPOs not covered by the A-LINC Centre.) The low response rate in Metro Toronto convinced us that a blanket request to all SPOs not covered by the A-LINC lists was the only viable strategy if we were to gain an adequate sample of eligible graduates outside the Greater Toronto Area.

personal goals, a question included in the short interview.

Regional representation was required by the terms of our contract. The other three factors we included followed from the focus of the follow-up study on people's adaptation to life in Canada. We saw employment status as likely signalling important differences in respondents' experiences to date and in their anticipated future progress in adapting to Canada (an impression confirmed in the in-depth interviews, see below). Previous studies of immigrant adaptation to Canada (reviewed above) had indicated differences among adult males and females (the latter often assuming homemaking responsibilities and thus having less contact with Canadians outside the home and therefore also less proficiency in English). We also made sure that the in-depth interviews included both those who felt they had made substantial progress in reaching their goals in coming to Canada and those who thought they had not.

Within each language group, we established approximate quotas for interviews based on the actual joint distribution of respondents on these four characteristics. Interviewers were given separate lists for each category, for example, Metro Toronto graduates who were employed at the time of the survey who felt they had made little progress in reaching their personal goals. Interviewers were also provided with information drawn from the short interviews prior to making their calls. Interviewers followed a standard protocol in introducing themselves initially on the phone (see Appendices 1 and 2).

(iv) Representativeness

How representative is the sample of Level 3 graduates on which our survey is based? It is important to understand what is at issue here. It is common in reports of sample surveys to read statements such as 'Results should be accurate within 3 percentage points, 95 percent of the time.' Such statements refer to 'sampling error' and are based on the premise that the only thing that has caused the sample to differ from the population from which it was drawn is the luck of the draw. In other words all differences between sample and population, for example, in the proportion who are female or the proportion who report that the LINC program was of 'tremendous' benefit to them, are simply due to the luck of the (random) draw.

Our sample is subject to such 'sampling errors', but these are less important than factors that may have systematically biased our sample, that is, made it unrepresentative of the population completing LINC level 3 in 1995-96 in Ontario. These are sources of 'non-sampling error'. In contrast to 'sampling error',

there is no mathematical formula which would allow us to provide a quantitative estimate of the extent to which our sample results differ from what we would have found if the whole population had been interviewed.

The two main sources of 'non-sampling error' in the follow-up survey are first, the fact that the sample of SPOs from which we acquired our listing of graduates did not represent the full population of graduates. In the case of the A-LINC Centres, not all SPOs reported to them. A more serious problem, however, is that our own attempts to obtain the cooperation of SPOs outside the GTA were no where near as successful as the A-LINC Centres' efforts. Thus our coverage for the GTA is much more complete than elsewhere in Ontario. As noted above, we have estimated that the GTA data represent about two-thirds of graduates eligible for our study; however, the Metro and Peel A-LINC Centres contributed just over 80 percent of the names on our list. This means first that the names on our list for regions outside the GTA may be less representative of the full population than within GTA. This is because there is a stronger self-selection factor involved outside the GTA. Those SPOs who agreed to participate may have different characteristics than those who did not. Second, the imbalance in the list may it highly likely that graduates outside Metro/GTA would be under-represented among those who participated in the follow-up survey. This has, in fact, been the case.

Table 2.1 shows the distribution of LINC Level 3 graduates by region for each of the six language groups involved in the follow-up study. **Table 2.2** presents the distribution of respondents to the study by language group and region (here Metro, Peel and other regions). It is evident that our respondents are much more concentrated in the Metro/Peel areas than is the population of graduates. It is also clear, however, that the extent to which respondents over-represent the GTA differs among language groups. To take the extreme cases, the regional distribution of our Tamil respondents is almost a mirror image of the population distribution. This reflects the fact that the population itself is concentrated in GTA. In contrast, while three quarters of our sample of Arabic graduates are drawn from the Metro and Peel A-LINC Centre lists, only about half of the population of eligible graduates are from these regions; the large proportion of Arabic graduates in eastern and western Ontario is under-represented in our sample. In general, over-representation of GTA graduates in our achieved sample is minor in the case of Tamil and Cantonese[3];

[3] This does not take account of the relative distribution between Metro and Peel. In the case of Cantonese, respondents to the follow-up survey are about equally divided between Metro and Peel; the roll-up figures, however, show the great majority of graduates for the April 1994-March 1995 period in

more substantial in the case of Polish, and greatest for Arabic, Somali and Spanish.

Table 2.1: Distribution of LINC Level 3 Graduates by Region for the Selected First Language Groups

Region >>>> Language Group	Metro Toronto	GTA, outside Metro	Eastern Ontario	Western Ontario	Northern Ontario	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic	21.8	25.5	27.8	24.5	0.4	216
Cantonese	67.6	13.0	12.2	7.1	0.0	238
Polish	23.1	45.1	9.7	21.4	0.7	412
Somali	48.5	4.5	43.3	3.7	0.0	134
Spanish	35.7	13.6	21.7	27.8	1.2	345
Tamil	68.7	29.8	1.5	0.0	0.0	205

Table 2.2: Distribution of Respondents to Follow-up Survey of LINC Level 3 Graduates by Region for the Selected First Language Groups

Region >>>> Language Group	Metro/York A-LINC	Peel A-LINC	SPOs Other regions	
	%	%	%	n
Arabic	57.5	18.4	24.1	87
Cantonese	46.1	45.1	8.7	206
Polish	26.3	66.3	7.4	190
Somali	97.5	2.5	0.0	40
Spanish	49.7	36.1	14.2	155
Tamil	71.4	28.1	0.5	196

Metro. In fact, the Metro and Peel A-LINC lists yielded almost identical numbers of eligible Cantonese-speaking LINC 3 graduates, suggesting that this discrepancy, in part at least, reflects a real change in the geographic distribution of graduates over the past year. Presumably, Cantonese-speakers who settled initially in Metro Toronto, where they took LINC programs, then later moved to Peel region.

Within the regions covered by the A-LINC lists, the lists themselves appear reasonably representative of the population of graduates. **Table 2.3** compares the distribution of language groups shown by official 'roll-up' figures for the April 1994-March, 1995 period with the distributions found for the A-LINC Centre lists. In each region there is a reasonably good match between roll-up and A-LINC distributions. There are discrepancies in the distributions of Cantonese, as noted above, reflecting the surprisingly strong representation of Cantonese speakers on the Peel A-LINC list.

Table 2.3: Distribution of LINC Level 3 Graduates for the Selected First Language Groups for Metro Toronto/York Region: Comparison of Full Roll-up Distributions (April/94-March/95) with A-LINC Distributions (Feb/95-May/96)

Language Group	Roll-up: April/94-March/95		A-LINC: Feb/95-May/96	
	Metro Toronto	GTA, outside Metro	Metro	Peel
	%	%	%	%
Arabic	7.4	14.2	12.3	14.1
Cantonese	25.5	8.0	15.6	22.2
Polish	15.0	48.2	19.5	33.3
Somali	10.3	1.6	10.0	0.5
Spanish	19.5	12.2	17.9	14.3
Tamil	22.3	15.8	24.7	15.7
n	632	386	1304	925

The second main source of potential bias in our sample is that those graduates we interviewed were not a random sample of the restricted population of graduates represented by the names we acquired (directly or indirectly) from the SPOs. Two barriers intervened here. The first was our inability to reach people, mainly due to change in residence and phone number. The lists we received from A-LINC Centres showed that nearly every person had a telephone contact number, suggesting that the sample for our survey were probably not biased by people's lack of telephones; nonetheless, many people had moved residences since completing LINC and thus now had different numbers than the ones we received. The second was our inability to persuade people to participate in an interview if they did not wish to. We were not able to investigate whether the graduates we could not find are broadly similar to those we did locate; we were

not able to determine whether those who agreed to do the short interview were broadly similar to those who refused. To the extent that these groups are dissimilar, then our sample is unrepresentative.

A total of 2411 names were made available to us; most of their phone numbers were called at least once. In total 900 short interviews were completed. We could calculate a crude response rate on the basis of these figures; however, that would be misleading given that interviewers worked to a quota and simply ceased doing call-backs when quotas were reached. The response rate thus, in part, simply reflects the size of the quota. **Tables 2.4** to **2.6** provide a more informative picture; they record the distribution of 'final dispositions' of calls, excluding cases where there was no answer and the number was flagged for call-back (frequently more than once). These tables are based on a special analysis of Metro/York region data only.

Table 2.4 indicates that completed interviews represented half of 'final dispositions'. In a third of the cases the graduate was no longer at the phone number listed or the number itself was out of service; in 17 percent of cases the graduate was reached but declined to participate in the survey. Thus twice as many potential respondents were eliminated from the follow-up because they could not be located than explicitly opted out by their own decision. This is a common pattern in follow-up surveys.

Table 2.4 also indicates that the proportion of final dispositions represented by completed interviews varied dramatically among language groups. The highest proportions of completed interviews occurred for Polish and Cantonese, where refusal rates were low, and in the case of Polish, the proportion who had moved was also low. The proportion of completed interviews was about 60 percent for Tamil speakers, and about 40 percent for Arabic, Somali and Spanish speakers. In the cases of Somali and Spanish, mobility was the main problem -- twice as many potential respondents were lost due to moves than to refusals. In the cases of Arabic and Tamil, both refusals and moves were important factors.

Table 2.5 indicates that women were more likely to be interviewed than men; they are both less likely to have moved and less likely to refuse to participate. The pattern of responses thus served to increase the proportion of women in the sample; this is in the same direction as the distribution in the original LINC lists, themselves, where women are in a majority. Finally, **Table 2.6** indicates that the 'older' the phone number (the longer the period of time since our potential respondent had graduated), the less likely the interviewers were to be able to locate the person. The proportion of potential respondents found to have

moved declined from 37 percent for those who graduated before June 1995 to 21 percent for those who had completed level 3 between December 1995 and February 1996. The relatively high proportion of most recent graduates is somewhat inconsistent with this pattern.

As in the case of regional representation, the effect of response rate on the representativeness of the sample varies by language group. The impact of regional location on our sample is least for Polish and Cantonese speakers; it is greatest for Arabic, Somali and Spanish. In the case of Somali and, to a lesser extent, Arabic, we did not achieve the size of quota we had targeted. Due to practical difficulties (our Somali interviewer resigned part-way through the interviews), we were unable to complete in-depth interviews with Somali graduates.

Table 2.4: Results of Attempted Telephone Interviews by Language Group: Metro Toronto/York Region[1]

Language Group	Interviewed	Declined[2]	Moved[3]	
	%	%	%	n
Arabic	40.0	25.9	34.1	85
Cantonese	61.9	6.5	31.7	139
Polish	84.7	1.7	13.6	59
Somali	40.2	18.4	41.4	87
Spanish	42.0	17.2	40.8	174
Tamil	58.1	19.1	22.9	236
All	49.9	17.0	33.1	780

1. Excludes no answers and busy signals.
2. Includes 'passive refusals' where respondents agree to a later interview but cannot be reached.
3. Includes numbers not in service.

Table 2.5: Results of Attempted Telephone Interviews by Gender: Metro Toronto/York Region[1]

Language Group	Interviewed	Declined[2]	Moved[3]	
	%	%	%	n
Female	58.4	13.7	27.9	555
Male	40.9	20.9	38.2	220

1. Excludes no answers and busy signals.
2. Includes 'passive refusals' where respondents agree to a later interview but cannot be reached.
3. Includes numbers not in service.

Table 2.6: Results of Attempted Telephone Interviews by Graduation Date: Metro Toronto/York Region[1]

Language Group	Interviewed	Declined[2]	Moved[3]	
	%	%	%	n
Before June/95	45.5	17.3	37.2	156
June-August/95	52.9	13.7	33.5	227
Sept.-Nov./95	52.2	19.1	28.7	115
Dec./95-Feb./96	67.0	11.7	21.4	103
After Feb./96	53.1	17.3	29.6	179

1. Excludes no answers and busy signals.
2. Includes 'passive refusals' where respondents agree to a later interview but cannot be reached.
3. Includes numbers not in service.

3. Characteristics of LINC Level 3 Graduates

The follow-up survey gathered a minimum amount of profile information on the social characteristics of LINC level 3 graduates. We requested information on gender from the Assessment Centres and SPOs. In the short interview, respondents were asked about their age, family and marital status, country of origin, formal education, and occupational history. This information yielded two important findings: first, across the language groups, the primary clients of the LINC level 3 program (at least as indicated by those who complete the program) are women. The second finding is that clients from different language groups differ

substantially on other characteristics.

Gender

An early finding of the follow-up survey was that the majority of level 3 graduates of the LINC program were women. This information, in fact, came to us prior to the survey itself in the form of the distribution lists provided by the A-LINC Centres. **Table 3.1** shows the percent of females by language group both for these lists and (in aggregate) for those provided directly by SPOs. With the exception of the list of Arabic speakers on the Metro/York A-LINC list (but not the total list for the region), women form a large majority of graduates across language groups and regions. It should be remembered that these figures are for the sampling lists themselves and are unaffected by any gender bias in response rates to the survey. This gender distribution in LINC programs is particularly noteworthy in that studies of participation in adult ESL programs in Canada prior to the initiation of LINC (see particularly, Boyd, 1992; Cumming, 1991) had found far more men than women in these programs, often at a ratio of 2 to 1, and had suggested this was a problematic issue in those programs. The gender distribution of adults immigrating to Canada is almost equal among men and women.

Table 3.1: Gender by Language Group

Language Group	% female		
	A-LINC list Metro/York	A-LINC list Peel	SPO lists outside GTA
Arabic	49.6	68.0	54.8
Cantonese	66.2	64.9	76.9
Polish	71.8	79.2	76.0
Somali	70.0	- -	81.5
Spanish	64.0	74.2	70.5
Tamil	79.4	73.6	- -
All groups	69.8	71.7	70.1

- - Very small sample, so numbers are not cited.

Age Group

In all language groups except Cantonese, over 70 percent of graduates are between 25 and 44 years of age; the figure is close to 60 percent for Cantonese (see **Table 3.2**). Beyond this general pattern, there are substantial differences among groups. Cantonese graduates are on average older than those in other groups; Somali graduates, followed by Arabic and Tamil speakers, are younger. Thus, proportion of graduates under 35 ranges from 29 percent for Cantonese to 65 percent for Arabic and 78 percent for Somali.

Table 3.2: Age[1] by Language Group

Language Group	Under 25	25-34	35-44	Over 44	
	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic	17.5	47.6	24.3	10.7	103
Cantonese	6.8	22.1	35.1	36.1	208
Polish	7.6	34.3	37.4	20.8	198
Somali	15.0	62.5	15.0	7.5	40
Spanish	6.4	39.4	34.2	20.0	155
Tamil	16.4	46.4	28.6	8.7	196
All groups	10.6	37.8	31.9	19.8	900

1. Age and birth dates were potentially sensitive issues for some groups. Respondents were asked "What is your age group: 18-19, 20-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55 or older"?

Educational Attainment

The short interview survey asked respondents about the number of years of formal schooling they had had, and about their highest level of schooling. Median years[4] of schooling range from 12 for Cantonese and Somali graduates to 14 for Arabic, Polish and Spanish graduates (see **Table 3.3**). This likely represents the difference between completion of high school and several years of postsecondary education or training.

[4] The median year defines the point where half of respondents have fewer years of schooling than the median and half have more years of schooling.

Given the wide variety of school systems represented both within and across language groups, it is however, difficult to relate years of schooling to institutional levels or to fit benchmarks in each local system into a common set of categories. **Table 3.4** represents the attempt of interviewers to translate respondents' descriptions of their highest level of schooling into a common framework. It reveals some obvious anomalies. While Cantonese and Somali graduates have the same median years of education, Table 3.4 indicates that few Cantonese but a majority of Somalis, had not completed high school. Yet there appear to be meaningful patterns in group differences. The Somali, Cantonese and Tamil groups are similar in that comparatively few graduates have any kind of formal postsecondary education. Arabic, Polish and Spanish graduates from LINC include substantial proportions of individuals with postsecondary education and credentials. As a consequence, these language groups are much more heterogeneous in terms of educational attainment than others.

Table 3.3: Median Years of Formal Schooling[1] by Language Group

	Median	n
Arabic	14.0	103
Cantonese	12.0	207
Polish	14.0	198
Somali	12.0	39
Spanish	14.0	154
Tamil	13.0	195
All groups	13.0	900

1. Respondents were asked, "How may years have you attended school?"

Table 3.4: Educational Attainment[1] by Language Group

Language Group	Not completed high school	Completed high school	Some post-secondary	Non-univ. diploma[2]	Univ degree	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic	18.5	22.3	17.5	2.9	38.8	103
Cantonese	28.8	49.0	7.7	6.7	7.7	208
Polish	11.6	38.4	15.1	20.7	14.1	198
Somali	70.0	15.0	15.0	0.0	0.0	40
Spanish	25.8	21.3	22.5	11.0	19.4	155
Tamil	30.1	55.1	7.6	1.0	5.6	196
All groups	25.5	38.7	13.3	8.6	13.9	900

1. Respondents were asked, "What is the highest level of schooling you have obtained?"
2. Respondents with non-university, post-secondary credentials.

4. Recent Work and Educational Activities, Progress Toward Goals

Work and Education

The original proposal for a follow-up study of LINC 3 graduates set out as an explicit objective to discover where graduates went after the program, particularly with regard to employment and further training. The short interview included questions in these areas. Respondents were asked about their job market and educational activities over the three months prior to the survey. In other words, respondents were given a common time frame in terms of the survey (although not the same calendar months since the survey itself was conducted over a period of months), but not in terms of their graduation from the LINC program.[5]

Table 4.1 indicates respondents' labour force involvement in the three-month period prior to the survey.[6] In most groups (Cantonese and Somali are the exceptions), a majority of respondents were working or looking for work in the past three-month period. The extent to which they had been successful in obtaining jobs had varied substantially by group. In the case of Polish and Spanish graduates, about 40 percent were employed at the time of the survey, compared to less than 15 percent of Tamils or Somalis.

Although these figures are important in understanding the life circumstances of respondents, they cannot be used to investigate 'value-added' by the LINC program overall or for particular groups. There are two main reasons for this. The first is that the short survey did not allow space for investigating barriers individuals found to gaining employment. Here we would expect both commonalities and differences among groups. Secondly, the follow-up survey did not include a comparison or 'control' group against

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[5] Taking job histories, in particular, is a time-consuming exercise which was beyond the capacity of the short interview. An alternative approach to the one we adopted would have been to ask about the three-month period after graduation. However, this would have placed a considerable strain on respondents' memories since respondents who indicated they had held a job or taken a course over the previous three months were then asked a detailed set of questions on their use of English at work and/or at school.

[6] The figures in the Table 4.1 represent an analysis of responses to a set of questions on current employment status, whether the respondent had worked at anytime in the past three months and/or looked for work over the same period.

which the experience of LINC graduates could be compared. While inclusion of a control group was, in any case, beyond the scope of the research, it is questionable whether we could have arrived at a definition for such a group which all stakeholders would find credible. In particular, it cannot be assumed that individuals assessed for LINC who did not complete the program are similar to those who graduated. It may, for example, be that a substantial proportion of those who left the program prematurely, did so because they obtained employment (or an offer of employment-related training). Moreover, we do not know of any baseline data on employment by ethnolinguistic group in Ontario such as could provide a basis for interpreting whether the figures on employment in **Table 4.1** are relatively low or high for recent immigrants to Ontario or specific language groups. The high proportion of women in our sample should also be considered here, given that many respondents (in the long interviews) reported they had home-making responsibilities which prevented them from seeking work outside their homes.

Table 4.1: Recent Work History

Language Group	Employed at time of survey	Employed anytime during past 3 months[1,2]	Looking for work over past 3 months[1,3]	Not working or looking for work past 3 months	
	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic	32.1	1.0	20.4	46.6	103
Cantonese	22.1	4.3	13.5	60.1	208
Polish	40.4	6.6	17.2	35.9	198
Somali	12.5	2.5	25.0	60.0	40
Spanish	38.7	5.8	25.2	30.3	155
Tamil	12.8	5.6	41.3	40.3	196

1. But not currently employed.
2. The question asked "Did you hold a job anytime over the past three months?" However, some respondents who indicated that they were currently working did not answer yes to this question. This indicates that some people thought that we were asking if they had been employed for the whole of the past three-months. The survey may thus underestimate the number of respondents who were employed for a part of the three month period immediately prior to the survey.
3. But not employed during the past three months.

As **Table 4.2** indicates, in most language groups half or more of respondents had taken some training program or attended school (where English was the language of instruction) within the past three months.

that is, after they had graduated from the LINC program. Just over half (55 percent) of those who reported taking an educational program indicated that they had participated in an ESL course or other language training (e.g., business English, preparation for the TOEFL test) only. Most others had taken high school courses or short vocational courses (notably in computers) often in conjunction with ESL courses. Two-thirds of those who reported taking an educational program indicated they had taken language courses. This proportion is likely understated; many respondents simply indicated 'high school' or the name of a vocational training centre without indicating whether language instruction was involved.

Table 4.2: "Have you attended school or taken any training programs since graduating from the LINC program, where English was the language of instruction?"

Language Group	Yes	
	%	n
Arabic	41.7	103
Cantonese	58.7	208
Polish	51.0	198
Somali	60.0	40
Spanish	60.0	155
Tamil	53.1	196

Progress Toward Goals

Near the end of the short interview, respondents were asked how much progress they thought they had made toward their personal goals. As shown in Table 4.3, the majority of graduates offered positive views of their personal situations. In sharp contrast to this general pattern, the overwhelming majority of Cantonese LINC graduates said they felt they had made little or no progress. It is difficult to assess whether there may be cultural differences or expectations that might have determined responses to this question differently for the Cantonese compared to the other groups.

Table 4.3:

Language Group	Tremendous amount	a lot	a little/ none	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic	34.0	49.5	16.5	0.4	103
Cantonese	1.9	18.3	76.9	0.0	208
Polish	14.6	51.5	32.8	0.7	198
Somali	15.0	72.5	10.0	0.0	40
Spanish	8.4	59.4	30.6	1.2	155
Tamil	10.4	60.2	18.4	0.0	196

5. Uses of English in Everyday Life

Consumer Services

The short interview began by asking respondents a series of questions on their dealing with retailers (e.g., local supermarkets) and a range of service providers (doctors and nurses, pharmacists, bank staff, landlords or real estate agents, and staff of social services or government offices). Initial 'filter' questions asked respondents whether they had, in fact, dealt with retailers and particular types of service providers over the past three months. Those who indicated that they had were then asked about the extent to which their dealings had been in English. Selected comparisons of situations across different language groups are shown in **Figures 5.1** to **5.4**. Detailed results are presented separately for individual language groups in **Tables 5.1** to **5.6**.

What this part of the survey shows is that use of English varies substantially across language groups. Moreover, differences among groups are generally consistent across types of services. Groups more likely to use English in one sphere, for example, medical services, are also more likely to use English in other areas such as shopping or obtaining banking services. Most speakers of Somali, Spanish and Tamil tend to use English frequently in their everyday interactions, as do many speakers of Arabic and Polish. Speakers of Cantonese, however, tend not to use English as much. These differences may reflect the extent to which services are available and historically established in local communities in Ontario in these respective languages.

Figure 5.1 compares language groups in terms of how frequently individuals have used English in dealing with doctors and nurses over the past three months. Communications about health matters are potentially among the most important and the most sensitive of individuals' dealings with service providers. **Figure 5.1** indicates that the extent to which different language groups use English in this area varies greatly. Cantonese speakers communicated with doctors and nurses almost exclusively in their first language. Less than one in 10 use English always or half the time with medical staff. Only minorities of Arabic and Polish graduate report that they always use English with doctors and nurses. In contrast, 70 percent of Somali graduates report always using English with doctors and nurses; this is also the case for a majority of Spanish and Tamils. Examination of Tables 5.1 to 5.6 reveals a similar pattern in dealings with pharmacists. Seventy percent or more of Somali, Spanish and Tamil graduates report that they always use

English, compared to 42 percent of Polish graduates and smaller minorities of Arabic and Cantonese graduates.

Figure 5.1

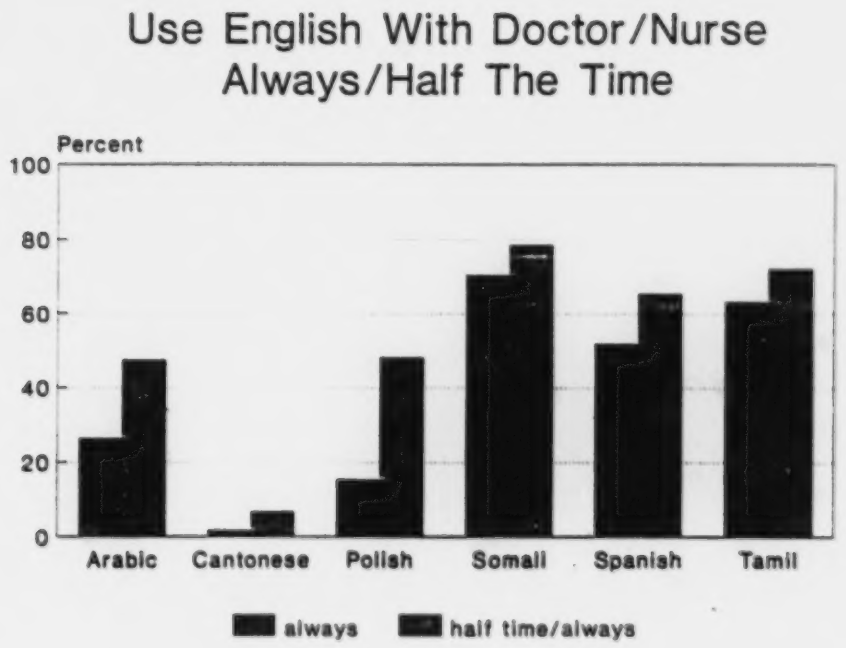


Figure 5.2

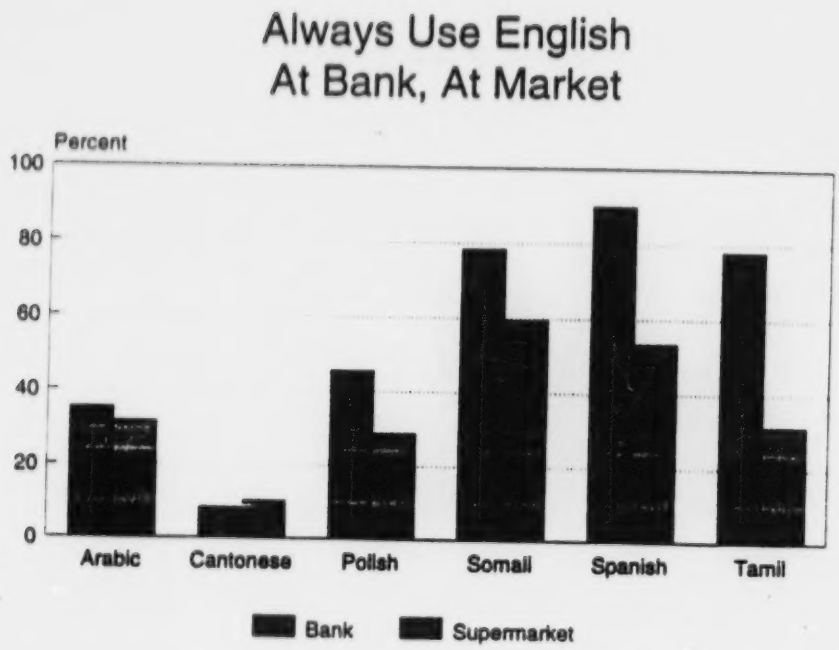


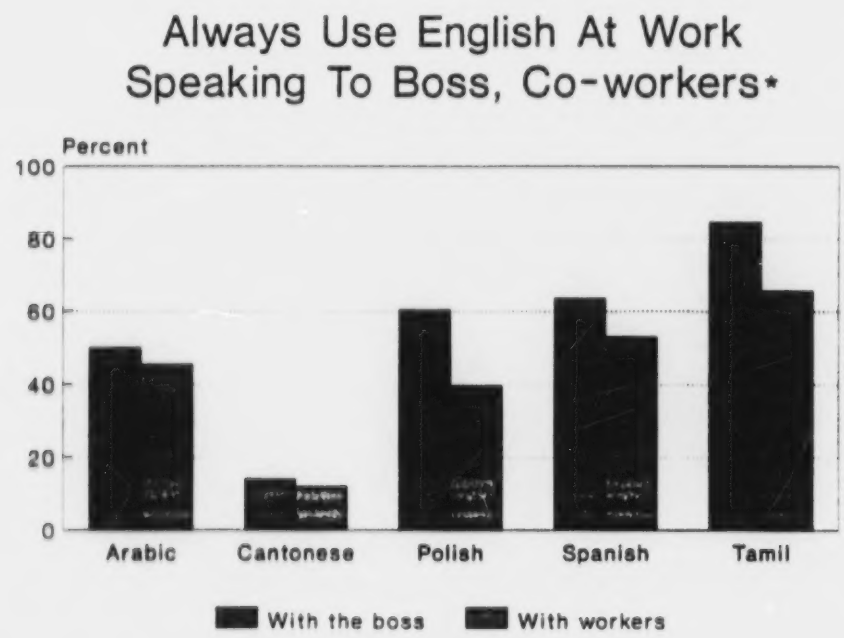
Figure 5.2 presents the proportions of respondents in each language group who reported always using English with staff at their bank branches and at their local supermarkets. The pattern of language use in dealing with bank staff is similar to that for medical staff. Cantonese, Arabic, and to a lesser extent, Polish graduates were much less likely to use English than Somali, Spanish and Tamil graduates. In the case of dealing with supermarket staff, differences among groups are much narrower, although Somali and Spanish graduates more frequently reported always using English, than did other groups.

If the retail food sector appears, from graduates' reports, as the most consistently accommodating to use of languages other than English, social and government agencies are most consistently cited as places where English is always used. Even among Cantonese graduates, a majority (61 percent) report always using English.

At Work

Respondents who indicated that they had been employed anytime during the past three months were asked about use of English in speaking to their bosses and to their co-workers. As shown in **Figure 5.3**, there are again large differences in use of English across language groups. (For greater detail see **Tables 5.1-5.6**.) Less than 20 percent of Cantonese, compared to half of Arabic graduates and larger majorities in other groups, reported always speaking to their bosses in English. While fewer respondents in each group reported always using English in communicating with other employees, differences among language groups persist.

Figure 5.3



* Excludes Somalis due to small numbers.

Table 5.1-5.6: "Over the past three months have you communicated with each of the following in English: not at all, sometimes, about 50% of the time, or always? [Asked only of those who indicated that they had dealt with the designated people over the past three months.]

Table 5.1: Arabic

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Staff of local supermarkets	31.5	8.7	28.3	31.5	0.0	92
doctors and nurses	40.0	12.6	21.1	26.3	0.0	95
pharmacists	36.0	8.1	30.2	25.6	0.0	86
staff of a bank branch	35.2	4.5	25.0	35.2	0.0	88
landlords or real estate agents	66.7	11.0	11.0	11.0	0.0	9
staff of social services or government offices	0.0	11.1	22.2	66.7	0.0	9
speaking with your boss[1]	45.8	4.2	0.0	50.0	0.0	24
speaking with other employees[1]	50.0	4.2	0.0	45.8	0.0	24

Table 5.2: Cantonese

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Staff of local supermarkets	27.9	51.8	10.2	10.2	0.0	197
doctors and nurses	75.6	17.6	5.0	1.7	0.0	119
pharmacists	59.1	24.5	4.5	11.8	0.0	110
staff of a bank branch	49.1	32.3	10.2	8.4	0.0	167
landlords or real estate agents	70.0	15.0	5.0	10.0	0.0	20
staff of social services or government offices	12.2	24.5	2.0	61.2	0.0	49
speaking with your boss[1]	56.0	24.0	4.0	14.0	2.0	50
speaking with other employees[1]	44.0	38.0	6.0	12.0	0.0	50

Table 5.3: Polish

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of the time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Staff of local supermarkets	3.6	17.2	50.5	28.6	0.0	192
doctors and nurses	38.0	14.0	32.7	15.3	0.0	150
pharmacists	21.9	18.5	16.4	42.5	0.1	146
staff of a bank branch	20.6	13.3	20.6	45.5	0.0	165
landlords or real estate agents	20.2	18.5	4.8	56.5	0.0	124
staff of social services or government offices	6.3	20.0	8.8	65.0	0.0	80
speaking with your boss[1]	19.8	8.8	11.0	60.4	0.0	91
speaking with other employees[1]	20.9	12.1	27.5	39.6	0.0	91

Table 5.4: Somali[2]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of the time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Staff of local supermarkets	0.0	21.6	18.9	59.5	0.0	37
doctors and nurses	2.7	18.9	8.1	70.3	0.0	37
pharmacists	2.6	15.8	5.3	76.3	0.1	38
staff of a bank branch	0.0	18.9	2.7	78.4	0.0	37
landlords or real estate agents	0.0	14.7	5.9	79.4	0.0	34
staff of social services or government offices	6.7	26.7	13.3	53.3	0.0	15

Table 5.5: Spanish

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of the time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Staff of local supermarkets	7.4	23.6	15.5	53.4	0.0	148
doctors and nurses	18.6	16.1	13.6	51.7	0.0	118
pharmacists	10.0	5.0	5.0	80.0	0.0	100
staff of a bank branch	1.6	4.7	3.9	89.9	0.0	129
landlords or real estate agents	8.2	0.0	8.2	83.7	0.0	49
staff of social services or government offices	5.6	14.8	11.1	66.7	1.9	54
speaking with your boss[1]	10.6	13.6	12.1	63.6	0.0	66
speaking with other employees[1]	13.6	16.7	16.7	53.0	0.0	66

Table 5.6: Tamil

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Staff of local supermarkets	5.9	42.0	20.2	31.4	0.5	188
doctors and nurses	3.8	24.2	8.9	63.1	0.0	157
pharmacists	3.6	13.6	2.7	79.1	0.9	110
staff of a bank branch	2.2	16.1	2.9	78.1	0.7	137
landlords or real estate agents	6.8	21.6	1.1	69.3	1.1	88
staff of social services or government offices	8.8	14.0	1.8	75.4	0.0	57
speaking with your boss[1]	3.1	9.4	3.1	84.4	2.0	32
speaking with other employees[1]	9.4	12.5	12.5	65.6	0.0	32

1 "Over the past three months have you used English in your current or your last job for each of the following activities: not at all..?"

2. The number of Somali speakers in our sample who had been employed within the past three months was too small to offer reliable data.

Use of Mass Media

In addition to asking respondents about their use of English in communication with retailers and service providers, we also included a brief set of questions in the short interview dealing with use of mass media in respondents' first languages and in English. **Figures 5.4** and **5.5** present profiles of mass media use: for more detail, see **Tables 5.7** to **5.12**.

As **Figure 5.4** indicates, LINC graduates make widespread use of newspapers and magazines in their first languages. In the case of Cantonese and Polish, 80 percent of respondents reported reading a newspaper or magazine in their first language at least once a week. This is also the case for a majority of Arabic and Tamil respondents and a near-majority of Spanish graduates. These figures show relatively high levels of literate practices as well as of first-language maintenance. In sharp contrast, only five percent of Somali

graduates reported reading a newspaper or magazine in Somali on a weekly basis; over half indicated they did not read newspapers in their first language at all. A majority of most language groups report reading a newspaper or magazine in English at least once a week. The exceptions are the Somali and Cantonese groups, polar opposites in terms of access to newspapers in their first language. Again, these trends may reflect the extent to which printed media are available in these respective languages locally.

Respondents were, in general, less likely to report reading books in either their first language or in English, than newspapers or magazines. There are, however, similar patterns of differences among groups. Over 40 percent of Cantonese and Polish respondents reported reading a book in their first language at least once a week, compared to less than 10 percent of Somali and Arabic graduates. Almost half of Spanish graduates reported reading a book in English at least once a week; far fewer read books in Spanish. The same pattern is found for newspaper reading. Nonetheless, about half of all respondents in all language groups reported reading books in English regularly (once a day, week or month), figures which compare favorably with norms for adult Canadians (cf. Statistics Canada, 1996, p. 71).

Figure 5.5 profiles uses of radio and TV in respondents' first languages and in English. Use of English language radio and TV - universally available 24 hours a day - is compared to daily use of first language broadcast media, and daily and weekly use combined. Majorities of all groups, often approaching 100 percent, listen to English language radio and/or watch English language TV daily. Use of broadcast media in their first language varies dramatically across language groups. For Somali and Arabic speakers, there is almost no use on a weekly basis. It appears, in fact, that these groups have virtually no access to radio or TV programs in their first languages. In the case of other groups most respondents access broadcast media in their first languages at least weekly, and in the case of Cantonese, Polish and Tamil, daily.

Figure 5.4

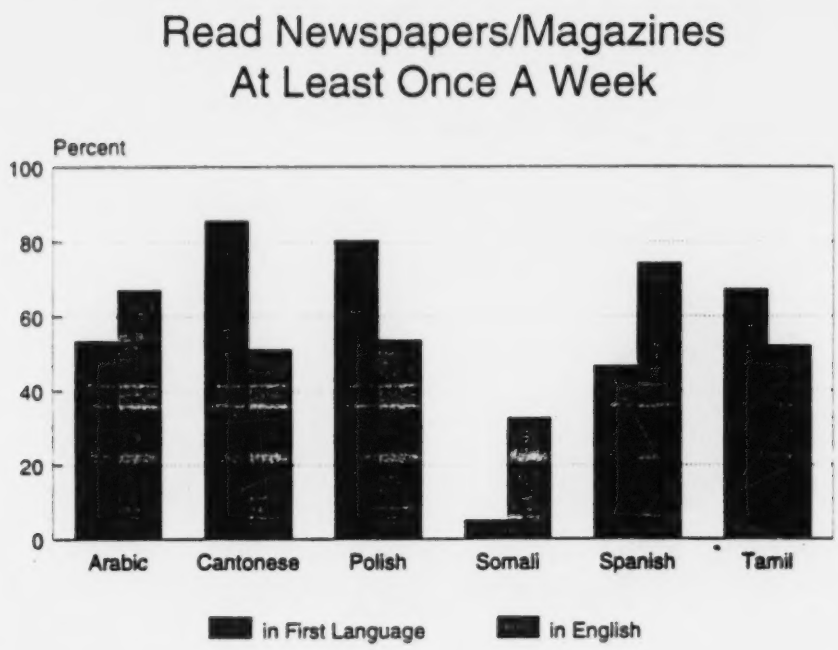

Read Newspapers/Magazines
At Least Once A Week
Percent
100
80
60
40
20
0
Arabic
Cantonese
Polish
Somali
Spanish
Tamil
in First Language
in English

Figure 5.5

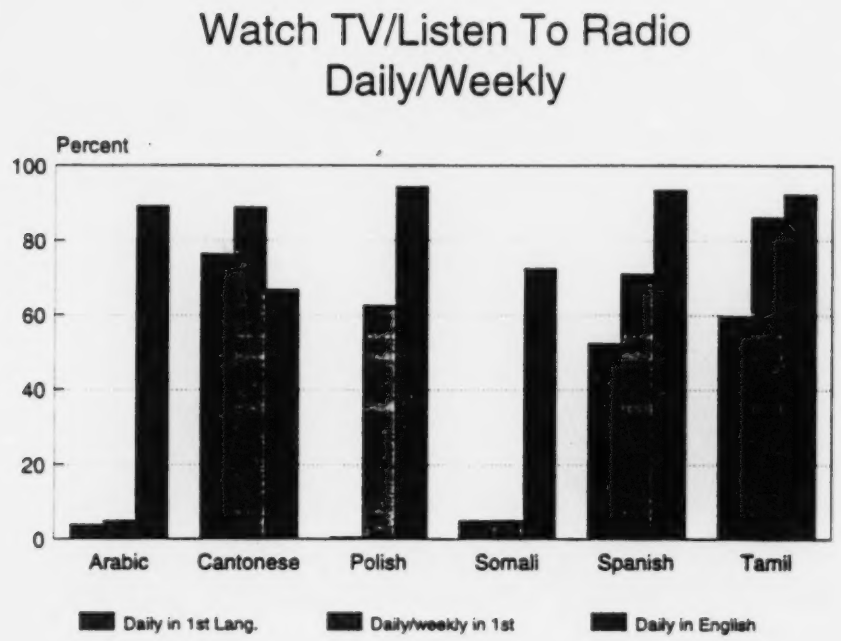

Watch TV/Listen To Radio
Daily/Weekly
Percent
100
80
60
40
20
0
Arabic
Cantonese
Polish
Somali
Spanish
Tamil
Daily in 1st Lang.
Daily/weekly in 1st
Daily in English

Table 5.7-12: "Please tell me how often you do each of the following in your first language and in English: not at all, ... at least once a day."

Table 5.7: Arabic

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	at least once a day	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	n
Read newspapers/ magazines							
in first language	35.0	2.9	8.7	48.5	4.9	0.0	103
in English	22.3	1.9	8.7	35.0	32.0	0.0	103
Read books							
in first language	71.8	3.9	17.2	5.8	1.0	0.0	103
in English	38.8	5.8	38.8	12.6	3.9	0.0	103
Listen to radio/ watch TV							
in first language	92.2	1.0	1.9	1.0	3.9	0.0	103
in English	6.8	0.0	1.0	2.9	89.3	0.0	103

Table 5.8: Cantonese

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	at least once a day	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
Read newspapers/ magazines							
in first language	8.2	2.9	3.4	40.9	44.7	0.0	208
in English	31.7	7.7	9.6	38.5	12.5	0.0	208
Read books							
in first language	40.9	9.1	8.2	22.1	19.7	0.0	208
in English	41.8	7.7	8.7	21.6	20.2	0.0	208
Listen to radio/ watch TV							
in first language	10.6	0.0	0.5	12.5	76.4	0.0	208
in English	8.2	1.4	3.8	19.7	66.8	0.0	208

Table 5.9: Polish

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	at least once a day	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	N
Read newspapers/ magazines							
in first language	4.0	5.1	10.6	56.6	23.7	0.0	198
in English	12.1	11.6	22.7	40.4	13.1	0.0	198
Read books							
in first language	18.2	13.1	22.2	32.3	14.1	0.0	198
in English	37.4	15.2	21.2	16.2	10.1	0.0	198
Listen to radio/ watch TV							
in first language	16.7	7.6	13.1	62.1	0.5	0.0	198
in English	0.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	94.4	0.0	198

Table 5.10: Somali

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	at least once a day	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	n
Read newspapers/ magazines							
in first language	55.0	5.0	35.0	0.0	5.0	0.0	40
in English	27.5	7.5	32.5	17.5	15.0	0.0	40
Read books							
in first language	72.5	5.0	17.5	2.5	2.5	0.0	40
in English	30.0	12.5	37.5	12.5	7.5	0.0	40
Listen to radio/ watch TV							
in first language	85.0	2.5	7.5	0.0	5.0	0.0	40
in English	5.0	0.0	7.5	15.0	72.5	0.0	40

Table 5.11: Spanish

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	at least once a day	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	n
Read newspapers/ magazines							
in first language	23.2	6.5	23.9	34.2	12.3	0.0	155
in English	11.6	3.9	10.3	42.6	31.6	0.0	155
Read books							
in first language	51.0	7.1	14.2	12.9	14.8	0.0	155
in English	29.0	7.1	16.1	34.8	12.9	0.0	155
Listen to radio/ watch TV							
in first language	27.1	0.0	1.9	18.7	52.3	0.0	155
in English	1.3	0.0	0.0	5.2	93.5	0.0	155

Table 5.12: Tamil

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	at least once a day	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	n
Read newspaper/ magazines							
in first language	4.1	7.7	20.9	56.1	11.2	0.0	196
in English	15.8	14.8	17.3	35.7	16.3	0.0	196
Read books							
in first language	48.5	9.2	23.5	9.2	9.7	0.0	196
in English	27.6	7.7	26.5	18.9	19.4	0.0	196
Listen to radio/ watch TV							
in first language	10.2	0.5	3.1	26.5	59.7	0.0	196
in English	2.0	0.0	0.0	5.6	92.3	0.0	196

Socializing

In the short interview, respondents were asked about their participation in community and/or religious gatherings, and in hobby clubs, sports teams or cultural organizations. LINC graduates were asked about participation in activities where their first language was used, and those where English was used. As is evident from **Table 5.13,** participation in these kinds of social activities is not common among respondents, even in their first languages. With the exception of Arabic graduates, the overwhelming majority of respondents in all groups indicated that they did not participate in hobby clubs, sports teams or cultural organizations at all. Participation in community or religious gathering where first languages are used is more common; however, only among Polish and Spanish graduates do substantial numbers report weekly participation. As **Table 5.14** shows, with the exception of Arabic graduates, the overwhelming majority of respondents reported that they did not participate in community or religious gatherings, or in clubs, teams or cultural organizations involving use of English. Among Arabic respondents a substantial minority indicated that they participated in these activities, typically on a monthly basis.

Table 5.13: Socializing in First Language by Language Group

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	
	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic					
Community/religious gatherings	28.2	4.9	54.4	12.6	103
Clubs/teams/cultural org.	39.8	4.9	54.4	1.0	103
Cantonese					
Community/religious gatherings	71.6	4.8	7.2	16.3	208
Clubs/teams/cultural org.	89.4	1.4	5.3	3.9	208
Polish					
Community/religious gatherings	58.1	1.5	6.6	33.8	198
Clubs/teams/cultural org.	98.0	0.0	0.5	1.5	198
Somali					
Community/religious gatherings	42.5	10.0	27.5	20.0	40
Clubs/teams/cultural org.	97.5	2.5	0.0	0.0	40
Spanish					
Community/religious gatherings	49.0	2.6	7.1	41.2	155
Clubs/teams/cultural org.	87.1	1.9	5.2	5.8	155
Tamil					
Community/religious gatherings	26.0	22.4	35.7	15.8	196
Clubs/teams/cultural org.	87.8	3.6	6.1	2.6	196

Table 5.14: Socializing in English by Language Group

Language Group	% indicating no participation		
	Community/religious gatherings	Clubs/teams/ cultural org.	n
Arabic	62.1	58.3	103
Cantonese	94.2	93.3	208
Polish	92.4	97.5	198
Somali	85.0	95.0	40
Spanish	69.7	81.9	155
Tamil	78.6	92.3	196

6. Difficulties in Using English

Consumer Services

Respondents who indicated that they used English (even only "sometimes") in each of the contexts noted above, were then asked how often using English caused them difficulties in that context. **Figure 6.1** shows the proportions of respondents by language group who indicated that they had no difficulty dealing with doctors and nurses in English. Less than half of respondents in any group reported that they had no difficulty communicating with medical personnel in English. With the exception of the low proportion of Somali graduates reporting no difficulties, there are relatively narrow differences among groups. It should be noted, however, that while in most groups those reporting difficulties indicated these occurred only 'sometimes', Arabic LINC graduates were much more likely to report they had problems always or half the time. (For greater detail see **Tables 6.1 to 6.6**).

Figure 6.1

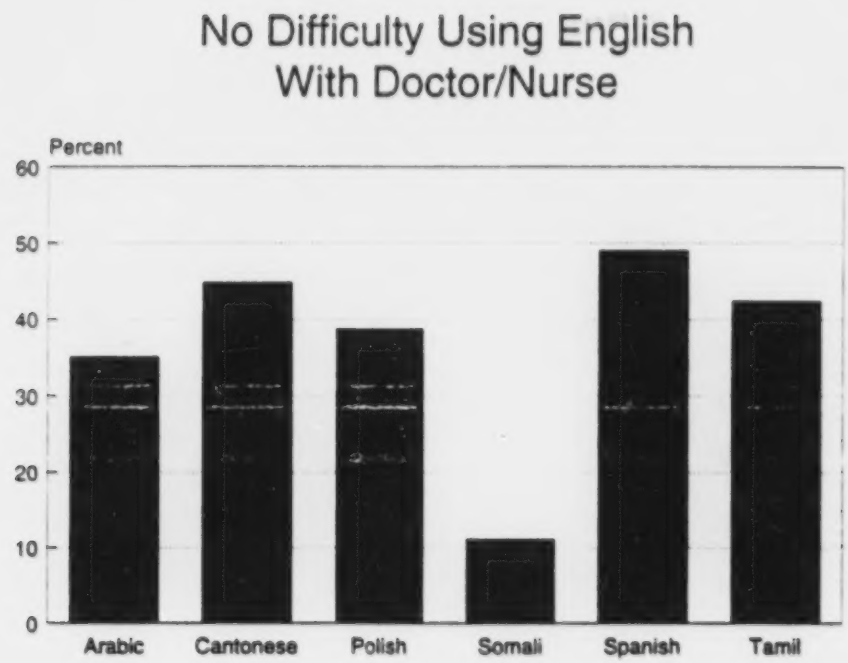


Figure 6.2 shows the proportion of respondents who indicated that they had no difficulty using English with bank staff and with local supermarket staff. (For greater detail, see **Tables 6.1** to **6.6**.) There are greater differences among groups here, particularly with regard to banking, than was the case for difficulties in dealing with medical personnel. This reflects the higher proportions of respondents in some language groups, Tamil and Spanish in the case of banking, Polish and Cantonese in the case of shopping, reporting no difficulty in using English. There are 'peaks' in Figure 2 which are not found in Figure 1.

Group differences in the proportion who report no difficulty in using English do not parallel differences we saw earlier in the extent to which English is used in banking and shopping. Groups which are similar in the extent to which they use English differ markedly in the extent to which they report that this causes difficulties. Somali, Spanish and Tamil groups are similar in that very large majorities of each reported that they always used English in dealing with bank staff. However, less than 20 percent of Somalis

reported that they did not have difficulties using English with bank staff, compared to almost 60 percent of Spanish graduates and almost 80 percent of Tamils. Relatedly, similar proportions of Spanish and Tamil graduates report no difficulty in using English, although Spanish graduates were more likely than Tamils to report that they always use English in shopping locally.

Most groups which report using English more frequently do not also more frequently report having difficulty communication in English. There are many reasons why more frequent use should not lead to more frequent difficulty. Those who use English more often may have been more proficient to start with or have become so through practice. Conversely more frequent use of English may not mean that LINC graduates face higher linguistic demands, but simply that they cope with a greater daily number of repetitive interactions requiring only basic English language skills.[7] Nevertheless, in the pattern of responses for our admittedly small sample of Somali graduates we seem to see a different pattern -- a group which has an exceptionally high degree of exposure to English (as indicated by the extent to which English is always used to obtain services) and is apparently disadvantaged by or during this in communicating everyday needs, not only in marketing and banking, but as seen earlier, in obtaining medical services.

Finally, the fact that fewer respondents report difficulty in using English in banks compared to local supermarkets, across groups, is somewhat unexpected. Differences are particularly marked for Spanish and Tamil groups. As indicated above, respondents in these language groups were more likely to use English in banks than in local shopping.

As noted in the last section, majorities of all language groups reported that they always use English in dealing with social services or government agencies. As **Figure 6.3** indicates, majorities of all groups, except Spanish graduates, indicate at least some difficulty caused by dealing with staff of these agencies in English. Most respondents who reported using English with agency staff reported that they did not use an interpreter when dealing with these agencies (75 percent of Tamil graduates, 60-67 percent of others). Among the small minority who did use interpreters or translators, two-thirds indicated that the agency itself did not provide this service to them.

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[7] It is worth noting that we looked at the relationship between reported use of English and reported difficulties in communication in English at the level of individual responses (rather than group patterns). Both overall, and within specific language groups, there was little or no correlation between reports of use and difficulty in any sphere (marketing, banking, medical services, etc.)

Figure 6.2

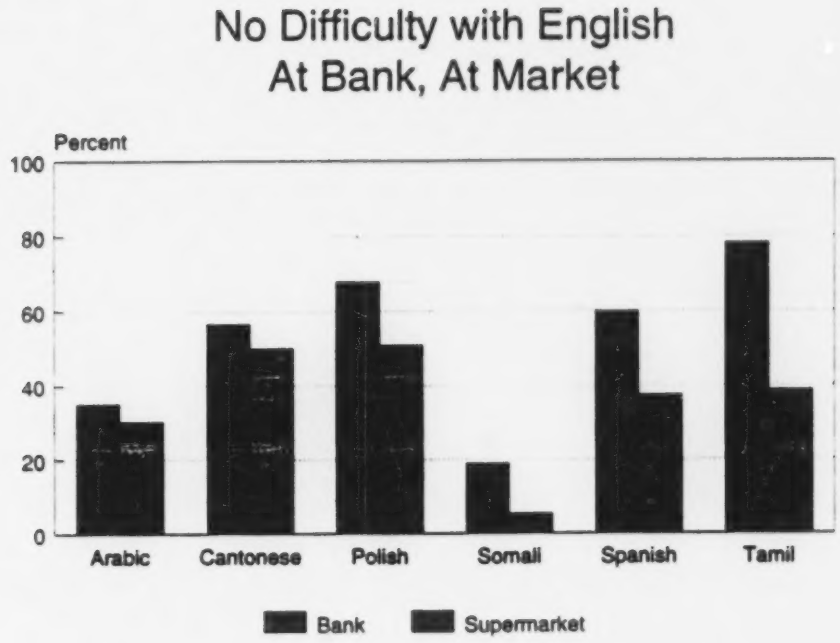
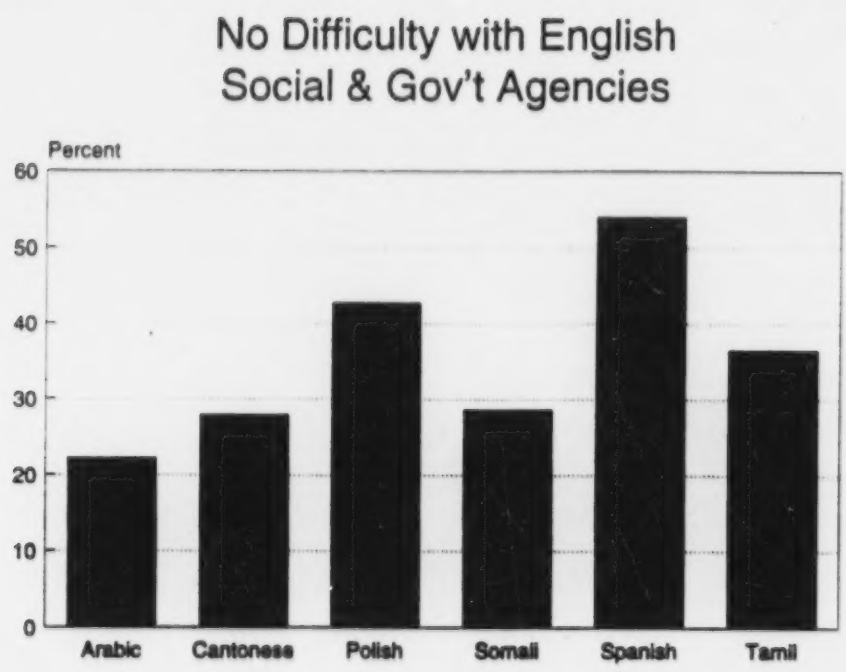

No Difficulty with English
At Bank, At Market
Percent
100
80
60
40
20
0
Arabic
Cantonese
Polish
Somali
Spanish
Tamil
Bank
Supermarket

Figure 6.3



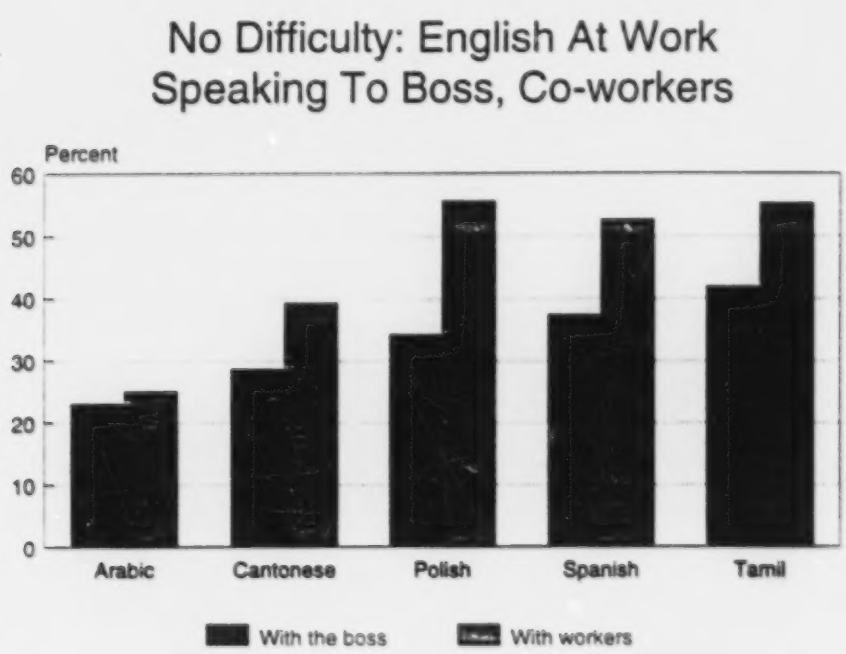
At Work and School

Paralleling an earlier question on use of English at work to communicate to the boss and co-workers, respondents were later asked how frequently communicating in English in this context caused them difficulties. In addition, respondents were asked about difficulties communicating in English in a school setting -- both in programs they themselves had taken, and in parent-teacher meetings. **Figures 6.4** and **6.5** present selected findings for these questions. Detailed results for these questions are presented in Tables 6.1 to 6.6.

As Figure 6.4 indicates, between 25 and 40 percent of respondents across language groups reported no difficulty in speaking to their bosses at work. (Note that Somali graduates are not included here owing to small numbers in our sample.) Most indicated that communicating in English sometimes caused them difficulty; however, almost 70 percent of Arabic graduates indicated that they always had problems. There

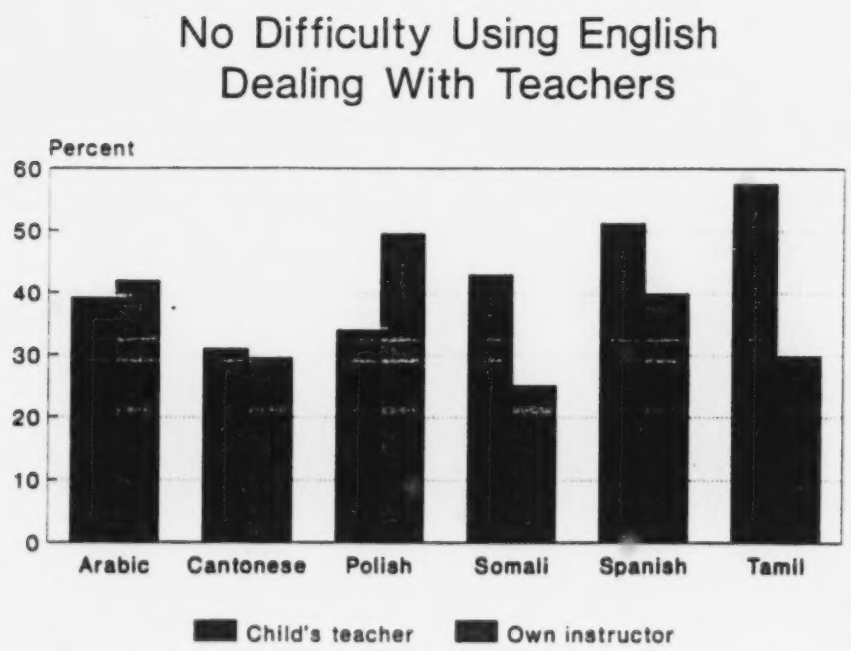
is a similar pattern but a broader range of group differences in the case of communication with other employees. Only a quarter of Arabic graduates reported no difficulty; over half indicate that they always have problems. In contrast, over half of Polish, Spanish and Tamil respondents using English in speaking with co-workers reported that this did not cause them difficulty.

Figure 6.4



Respondents who indicated that they dealt with the school system, either as a parent or on behalf of someone else in the family with a child in school, were asked about any difficulties caused by using English in meetings with teachers and other school staff. Responses varied substantially by language group (see **Figure 6.5**). About a third of Cantonese and Polish graduates in this situation reported that communicating with teachers and other school staff in English did not cause them difficulty, but suggesting that two-thirds of our sample from these language groups did find uses of English with school staff problematic. In contrast, over half of Spanish and Tamil graduates reported that they did not have problems.

Figure 6.5



As indicated earlier, about half of respondents had attended school or taken a course within the past three months. Those who had were asked how often they had difficulty understanding and speaking to their instructor. As shown in Figure 6.5, 25 to 40 percent of most groups, but almost half of Polish graduates, reported no difficulty in communicating with their own instructors in English. The majority of respondents, however, who did indicate experiencing some difficulties communicating with their own instructors in English may suggest that LINC level 3 was not adequate to prepare these people for training or other educational courses in English. (This appears to be especially true for about half of the Arabic-speaking respondents.)

Table 6.1-6.6: "Over the past three months has <u>using English</u> caused you difficulties in communicating with each of the following: not at all... or always. [Asked only of those who indicated that they had dealt with the designated people over the past three months <u>in English</u>.]

Table 6.1: Arabic[1]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
staff of local supermarkets	30.2	19.0	28.6	22.2	0.0	63
doctors and nurses	35.1	14.0	26.3	24.6	0.0	57
pharmacists	30.9	16.4	30.9	21.8	0.0	55
staff of a bank branch	35.1	22.8	24.6	17.5	0.0	57
staff of social agencies or government offices	22.2	66.7	0.0	11.1	0.0	9
speaking with your boss[2]	23.1	0.0	7.7	69.2	0.0	13
speaking with other employees[2]	25.0	16.7	0.0	58.3	0.0	12
understanding/ speak to instructor[3]	41.9	9.3	34.9	14.0	0.0	43
meeting child's teacher[3]	39.2	25.5	27.5	7.8	0.0	51

Table 6.2: Cantonese

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
staff of local supermarkets	50.0	34.5	12.0	3.5	0.0	142
doctors and nurses	44.8	48.3	3.4	3.4	0.0	29
pharmacists	53.3	31.1	11.1	4.4	0.0	45
staff of a bank branch	56.5	29.4	10.6	3.5	0.0	85
landlords or real estate agents	33.3	50.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	6
staff of social agencies or government offices	27.9	41.9	11.6	18.6	0.0	43
speaking with your boss[2]	28.6	52.4	9.5	9.5	0.0	21
speaking with other employees[2]	39.3	42.9	10.7	3.6	3.6	28
understanding/ speak to instructor[3]	29.5	48.4	15.6	4.9	1.6	122
meeting child's teacher[3]	31.0	42.9	9.5	8.3	8.3	84

Table 6.3: Polish

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
staff of local supermarkets	50.8	34.6	13.5	1.1	0.0	185
doctors and nurses	38.7	39.8	17.2	4.3	0.0	93
pharmacists	72.6	21.2	6.2	0.0	0.0	113
staff of a bank branch	67.9	23.7	6.9	0.8	0.8	131
landlords or real estate agents	65.7	27.3	7.1	0.0	0.0	99
staff of social agencies or government offices	42.7	40.0	13.3	4.0	0.0	75
speaking with your boss[2]	34.2	49.3	8.2	8.2	0.0	73
speaking with other employees[2]	55.6	34.7	8.3	1.4	0.0	72
understanding/ speak to instructor[3]	49.5	39.6	7.9	3.0	0.0	101
meeting child's teacher[3]	34.0	35.9	15.5	3.9	10.7	103

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Table 6.4: Somali[4]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
staff of local supermarkets	5.4	54.1	10.8	29.7	0.0	37
doctors and nurses	11.1	58.3	19.4	11.1	0.0	36
pharmacists	8.1	59.5	24.3	8.1	0.0	37
staff of a bank branch	18.9	62.2	13.5	5.4	0.0	37
landlords or real estate agents	26.5	50.0	17.6	5.9	0.0	34
staff of social agencies or government offices	28.6	35.7	14.3	21.4	0.0	14
understanding/ speak to instructor[3]	25.0	58.3	4.2	12.5	0.0	24
meeting child's teacher[3]	42.9	42.9	14.3	0.0	0.0	28

Table 6.5: Spanish

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
staff of local supermarkets	37.2	45.3	13.9	3.6	0.0	137
doctors and nurses	49.0	46.9	3.1	1.0	0.0	96
pharmacists	57.8	32.2	4.4	5.6	0.0	90
staff of a bank branch	59.8	29.9	9.4	0.8	0.0	127
landlords or real estate agents	64.4	31.1	2.2	2.2	0.0	45
staff of social agencies or government offices	54.0	34.0	12.0	0.0	0.0	50
speaking with your boss[2]	37.3	52.5	6.8	3.4	0.0	59
speaking with other employees[2]	52.6	40.4	5.3	1.8	0.0	57
understanding/ speak to instructor[3]	39.8	50.5	9.7	0.0	0.0	93
meeting child's teacher[3]	51.2	39.0	7.3	1.2	1.2	82

Table 6.6: Tamil

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
staff of local supermarkets	38.6	56.3	4.5	0.6	0.0	176
doctors and nurses	42.4	53.0	4.0	0.7	0.0	151
pharmacists	65.7	33.3	1.0	0.0	0.0	105
staff of a bank branch	78.2	20.3	0.8	0.8	0.0	133
landlords or real estate agents	71.6	27.2	1.2	0.0	0.0	81
staff of social agencies or government offices	36.5	55.8	7.7	0.0	0.0	52
speaking with your boss[2]	41.9	41.9	0.0	12.9	0.0	31
speaking with other employees[2]	55.2	37.9	0.0	6.9	0.0	29
understanding/ speak to instructor[3]	29.8	64.4	5.8	0.0	0.0	104
meeting child's teacher[3]	57.6	37.6	4.7	6.9	0.0	85

1. The number of Arabic speakers who reported using English with landlords or real estate agents within the past three months was too small to offer reliable data.
2 "Over the past three months, has using English in your current or your last job caused you difficulties in doing each of the following activities: not at all....." [Asked of those who had indicated they had held a job anytime in the past three months.]
3. "Over the past three months, has using English caused you difficulties in doing each of the following activities: not at all...." [Asked of those who had indicated they had attended school or taken a training program in the past three months (for self) or who indicated they deal with the school system as a parent of on behalf of someone else in their family with a child in school.]
4. The number of Somali speakers in our sample who had been employed within the past three months was too small to offer reliable data.

7. Literacy: Uses and Difficulties

In addition to the use of mass print media, uses of literacy were raised in the short interview in two contexts: labour market activities and school-based activities.

Labour Market

Respondents were asked how often they used English in their current or last job in reading messages, forms and health warnings. **Table 7.1** reveals two main patterns of the responses. First, Spanish and Tamil LINC graduates were much more likely than others to report that they always used English to read work-related material. Second, with the exception of Tamils, responses are essentially polarized between 'always' and 'not at all'. In other words, respondents have found jobs either where reading in English (or reading in general) is not a requirement or where it is a regular feature of the job. While many respondents work in environments where both English and their first language are used with the boss and with co-workers, use of literacy skills does not show this pattern.

Table 7.1: "Over the past three months have you used English in your current or your last job for ...reading messages, forms and health warnings?" [Asked only of those who had been employed at some point during the past three months.[1]]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic	45.8	8.3	8.3	37.5	0.0	24
Cantonese	40.0	32.0	0.0	28.0	0.0	50
Polish	48.4	17.6	4.4	28.6	1.1	91
Spanish	28.8	12.1	6.1	53.0	0.0	66
Tamil	15.6	6.3	3.1	75.0	0.0	32

1. The number of Somali speakers in our sample who had been employed within the past three months was too small to offer reliable data.

Respondents who had been looking for work within the past three months were asked about their uses of English in reading job advertisements and in completing application forms. As Table 7.2 indicates, there

are substantial differences in experience both among and within language groups. As we would expect, in general, there is less variation with regard to application forms than use of English print advertisements. However among Arabic, Cantonese and Somali job seekers less than half reported that they always completed job applications in English; only 45 percent of Cantonese reported completing applications in English at least half the time. (We do not know to what extent those not completing English were simply not required to complete a form at all.)

There are large differences in people's reported uses of English for seeking employment through print advertising. Less than a quarter of Cantonese job-seekers reported using English at least half the time in reading ads compared to about half of Tamil and Arabic respondents, but 70 percent or more of Polish, Somali and Spanish job-seekers.

Table 7.2: Uses of Literacy in Job Searches[1]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic						
Job ads	30.6	13.9	38.9	16.7	0.0	36
Applications	30.6	13.9	38.9	16.7	0.0	36
Cantonese						
Job ads	38.1	38.1	9.5	14.3	0.0	42
Applications	31.0	21.4	11.9	33.3	2.4	42
Polish						
Job ads	10.6	17.0	34.0	36.2	2.1	47
Applications	17.0	21.3	6.4	53.2	2.1	47
Somali						
Job ads	0.0	25.0	25.0	50.0	0.0	12
Applications	33.3	25.0	0.0	41.7	0.0	12
Spanish						
Job ads	5.3	10.5	7.0	77.2	0.0	57
Applications	12.3	1.8	8.8	77.2	0.0	57
Tamil						
Job ads	14.4	38.0	14.0	33.0	0.0	100
Applications	16.0	22.0	3.0	58.0	1.0	100

1. "Over the past three months have you used English in doing each of the following activities:

   - Reading help wanted ads in newspapers or at employment agencies?
   - Filling out application forms?"

[Asked only of those who had indicated they had been looking for a new job sometime over the past three months.]

A majority of Arabic graduates using English literacy skills at work indicated that this always caused them difficulties. This is in sharp contrast to other groups. Among Tamil and Spanish graduates, majorities

indicated that they had no difficulty, while most others in each of these groups reported that they 'sometimes' had difficulty. Among other groups, responses are more evenly divided between reporting no problems and problems on some occasions.

Table 7.3: "Over the past three months has using English in your current or your last job caused you difficulties in ...reading messages, forms and health warnings?" [Asked only of those who had been employed at some point during the past three months.[1]]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic	23.1	15.4	7.7	53.8	0.0	13
Cantonese	43.3	43.3	6.7	0.0	6.7	30
Polish	45.7	39.1	10.9	4.3	0.0	46
Spanish	51.1	34.0	14.9	0.0	0.0	47
Tamil	63.0	37.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	27

1. The number of Somali speakers in our sample who had been employed within the past three months was too small to offer reliable data.

Reported difficulties in using English literacy skills in job search activities largely parallel the patterns for job-related uses of English (see **Table 7.4**). Over half of Arabic LINC graduates looking for work indicated that reading job ads in English and filling out application forms in English caused them problems at least half of the time. In other language groups, those reporting that they encountered difficulties in using English usually indicated that this occurred only 'sometimes'. Over half of Polish, Spanish and Tamil job-seekers indicated that they had no difficulty completing application forms. Fewer made this claim regarding use of English language job ads.

Table 7.4: Difficulties in Uses of Literacy in Job Searches[1]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic						
Job ads	12.0	24.0	48.0	16.0	0.0	25
Applications	20.0	28.0	44.0	8.0	0.0	25
Cantonese						
Job ads	50.0	30.8	7.7	11.5	0.0	26
Applications	57.0	28.6	10.7	3.6	0.0	28
Polish						
Job ads	36.6	51.2	7.3	4.9	0.0	41
Applications	36.8	50.0	7.9	5.3	0.0	38
Somali						
Job ads	25.0	58.3	0.0	16.7	0.0	12
Applications	20.0	60.0	10.0	10.0	0.0	10
Spanish						
Job ads	48.1	44.4	5.6	1.9	0.0	54
Applications	62.0	38.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	50
Tamil						
Job ads	38.8	57.6	2.4	0.0	1.2	85
Applications	61.4	38.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	83

1. "Over the past three months had using English caused you difficulties in:

   - Reading help wanted ads in newspapers or at employment agencies?
   - Filling out application forms?"

[Asked only of those who had indicated they had been looking for a new job sometime over the past three months.]

Education

Among those taking educational programs after LINC, majorities in four of six groups reported no difficulty in completing forms in English (see **Table 7.5**).[8] The exceptions are the Somali and Arabic groups. As might be expected, respondents reported frequent difficulties in coping with course materials in English. Majorities in all groups indicated that they at least sometimes had problems, again suggesting limitations in LINC level 3 as preparation for other educational programs for recent immigrants. The extent to which reading material in courses presented difficulties again varies by group. Almost half of the Arabic respondents indicated they experienced problems at least half the time.

Respondents with children in the school system or dealing with the schools for another family member were asked about any difficulties in completing forms for the school, or in understanding letters and notices from the school. As **Table 7.6** indicates, application forms were not a problem for most respondents in four of the six language groups; the exceptions as before, being Somali and Arabic. Reading letters and notices was reported as more challenging, although in most instances those reporting difficulties indicated this occurred only sometimes. However,over 30 percent of Arabic graduates, and over 20 percent of Cantonese reported having problems at least half the time.

[8] It should remembered that not all those taking courses after LINC are included in the set of graduates working or seeking work; similarly, not all job-seekers and job-holders took courses. These are distinct but overlapping sets of graduates. Moreover, the extent of the overlap varies among language groups.

Table 7.5: Difficulty in Uses of Literacy in Taking Educational Programs[1]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic						
Fill out forms	44.2	14.0	30.2	11.6	0.0	43
Reading material	37.2	18.6	32.6	11.6	0.0	43
Cantonese						
Fill out forms	73.8	18.0	5.7	1.6	0.8	122
Reading material	39.3	41.0	9.0	9.8	0.1	122
Polish						
Fill out forms	77.2	15.8	4.0	1.0	2.0	101
Reading material	38.6	39.6	15.8	5.9	0.0	101
Somali						
Fill out forms	20.8	66.7	8.3	4.2	0.0	24
Reading material	25.0	62.5	8.3	4.2	0.0	24
Spanish						
Fill out forms	67.7	28.0	4.3	0.0	0.0	93
Reading material	36.6	50.5	9.7	3.2	0.0	93
Tamil						
Fill out forms	83.7	14.4	0.0	1.9	0.0	104
Reading material	43.3	51.0	4.8	0.0	1.0	104

1. "Over the past three months had using English caused you difficulties in:

   - Filling out forms for the school or program?
   - Reading printed material such as textbooks or tests?"

[Asked only of those who had indicated they had attended school or taken an educational program sometime over the past three months.]

Table 7.6: Difficulties in Uses of Literacy in Filling in Dealing with Child's School[1]

	not at all	sometimes	about 50% of time	always	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Arabic						
Fill out forms	45.1	25.5	21.6	7.8	0.0	51
School notes	37.3	31.4	23.5	7.8	0.0	51
Cantonese						
Fill out forms	58.3	28.6	4.8	2.4	6.0	84
School notes	36.9	32.1	13.1	9.5	8.3	84
Polish						
Fill out forms	62.1	27.2	5.8	0.0	4.9	103
School notes	48.5	42.7	6.8	0.0	1.9	103
Somali						
Fill out forms	25.0	60.7	10.7	3.6	0.0	28
School notes	14.3	67.9	14.3	3.6	0.0	28
Spanish						
Fill out forms	61.0	32.9	4.9	1.2	0.0	82
School notes	56.1	34.1	8.5	1.2	0.0	82
Tamil						
Fill out forms	81.2	18.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	85
School notes	58.8	36.5	3.5	0.0	1.2	85

1. "Over the past three months had using English caused you difficulties in:

   - Filling out forms for the school?
   - Understanding letters and notices from the school?"

[Asked only of those who had indicated they dealt with the school system as a parent or on behalf of another family member with a child in school.]

8. Impact of the LINC Program

The final section of the short interview (excluding the small number of questions dealing with respondents' backgrounds) dealt with the perceived impact of the LINC program on graduates' lives. Respondents were asked how much (if at all) completing the LINC level 3 program had helped them in each of nine activities or areas. Each graduate was then asked to give an overall rating of how much benefit the LINC program had been. Responses to these questions are summarized in **Figures 8.1** to **8.6**; see **Tables 8.1** to **8.6** for more detail.[9] The responses were generally favourable about LINC. No groups reported dissatisfaction to any great extent, and most people thought LINC had helped them 'a lot', except for Cantonese who tended to say LINC had helped them only 'a little'.

Consumer Services

A majority of all groups except Cantonese rated the LINC program as being at least 'a lot' of help in their efforts to obtain medical services (see **Figure 8.1**). Arabic, Somali and Tamil respondents offered

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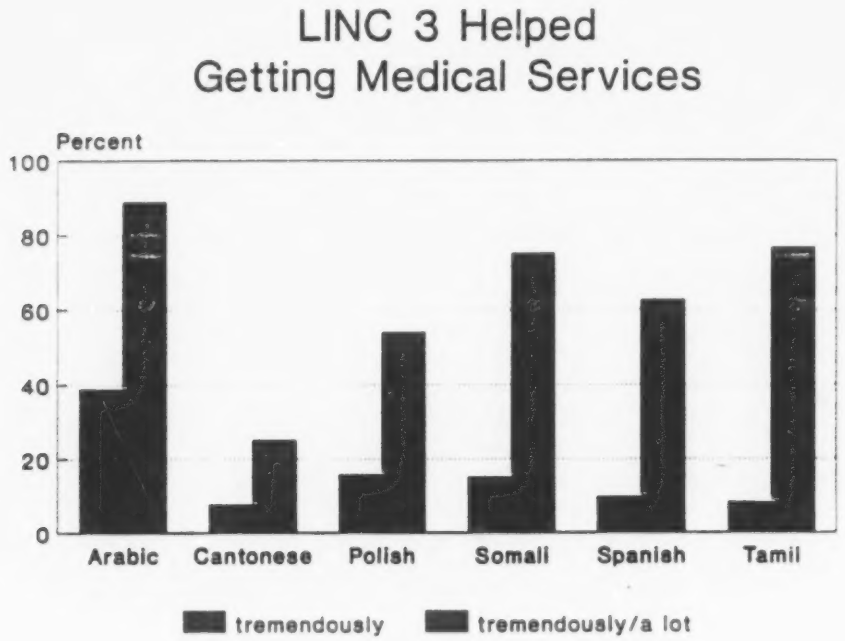
[9] The percentages reported in the Figures and Tables in this section are based on the full sample of respondents. This is the case even where we are revisiting areas where we have previously asked whether respondents had done a particular activity in the past three months (e.g., shopping, seeking medical services, seeking the services of a social or government agency) and whether they had done the activity in English. This raises the question as to whether we ought to have restricted the base for calculating percentages to those who had done the activity or those who had done it in English. In fact, in most instances it makes very little difference what base is used. The exceptions involve cases where restricting the base to those who undertook the activity, or undertook it in English results in a sharp drop in numbers. In the case of the benefit of the LINC program in obtaining medical services for example, 25 percent of Cantonese respondents overall rated LINC as being 'a lot' or a 'tremendous amount' of help. The proportion is about the same (24 percent) if we only take account of the views of those who dealt with doctors and nurses in the three months prior to the survey (119 of 208 respondents); it increases markedly (to 41 percent) if we only consider those (n=29) who dealt with doctors and nurses in English.

This is an isolated example. The other area where the base chosen makes a substantial difference concerns seeking services of a social or government agency. Among Cantonese, Spanish and Tamil graduates, those who have sought agency services are much more likely to indicate that the LINC program was a lot of help in this area than others. Whether or not respondents used English in seeking services has little impact on people's ratings of LINC programs. Among Cantonese speakers for example, restricting the base from the full sample to those who had actually dealt with social or government agencies results in an increase in the proportion who indicated LINC was 'a lot' or a 'tremendous amount' of help from 23 to 412 percent. In the case of Spanish graduates there is an increase from 48 to 72 percent; for Tamils, from 50 to 82 percent.

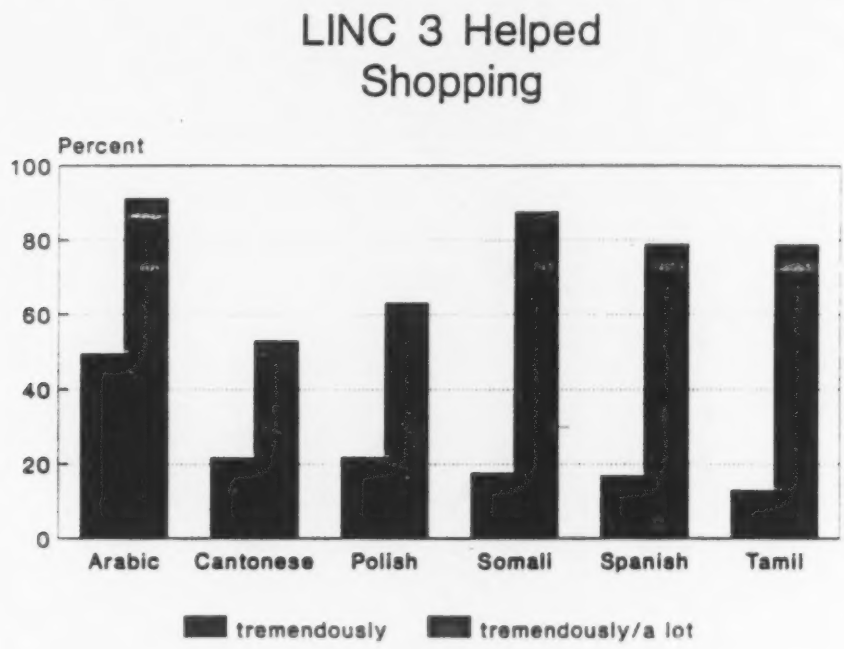
particularly positive ratings. As indicated earlier, only a small minority of Cantonese reported using English with doctors and nurses at least half the time. Among this minority, about 40 percent rated the LINC 3 program as providing 'a lot' or a 'tremendous amount' of help.

Figure 8.1



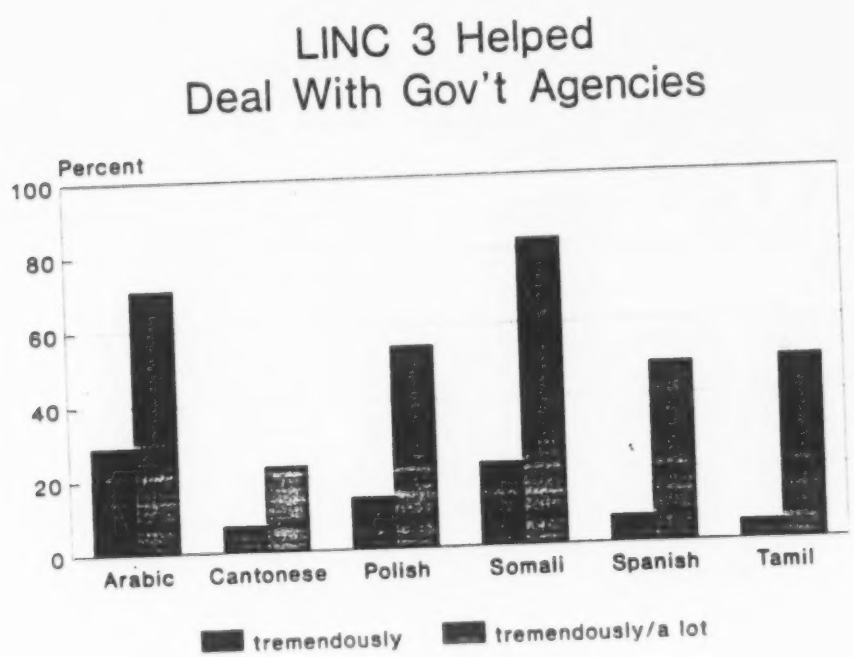
A majority of all language groups rated the LINC program as being 'a lot' or a 'tremendous amount' of help in making shopping easier (see **Figure 8.2**). This is the case even for Cantonese graduates who are least likely to use English in dealing with retailers.

Figure 8.2



There were more mixed views on how helpful the LINC program had been in terms of seeking services from social and government agencies (see **Figure 8.3**). (It should be remembered that in most language groups, only minorities of respondents reported dealing with staff at social or government agencies within the past three months.) Less than half or Cantonese, Spanish and Tamil respondents thought that LINC had been 'a lot' of help in this area. It should be noted, however, that if we only consider the views of those who had dealt with such agencies in the past three months, large majorities of both Spanish and Tamil graduates and about 40 percent of Cantonese offered opinions that LINC minimally provided 'a lot' of help.

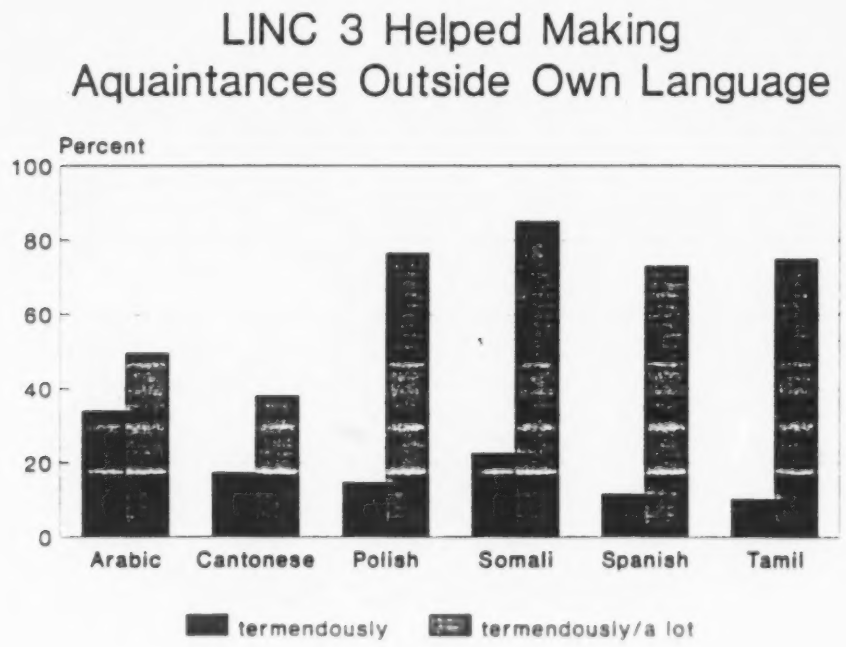
Figure 8.3



Socializing

Respondents were asked to what extent graduating from LINC level 3 helped them when it came to informally socializing with people. They were asked to consider two situations: chatting with neighbours and making the acquaintance of individuals not of their own language groups. Results for the latter question are presented in **Figure 8.4**. There is a relatively sharp division among groups. Large majorities of Polish, Somali, Spanish and Tamil graduates indicated that the LINC program had been 'a lot' of help in this area. A bare majority of Arabic respondents and less than half of Cantonese held this view. Arabic respondents, however, offered more positive views of the benefits of the LINC program in helping them socialize casually with neighbours. Polish respondents offered more negative views here, while for other groups, response patterns for the two questions on socializing were virtually identical.

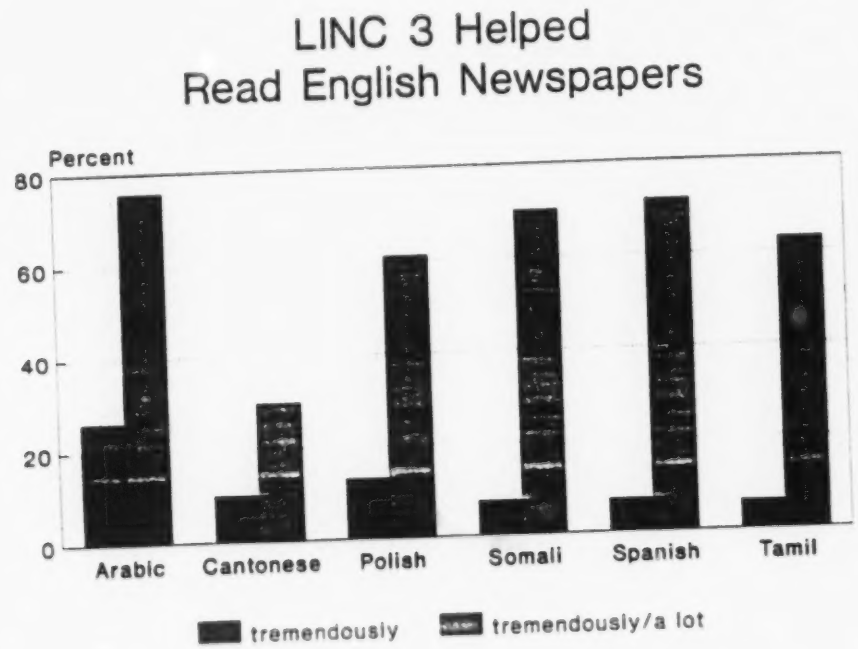
Figure 8.4



Mass Media

Despite the fact that different language skills are involved, ratings of the helpfulness of the LINC program for dealing with English language print media and English language broadcast media are very similar. **Figure 8.5** summarizes respondents' views regarding print media. While there are substantial differences in actual uses of English language newspapers and magazines across language groups, views on the relevance of the LINC program are generally similar. In particular, Somali graduates who on average are less likely to read English language newspapers, offer views which are as positive as those of other groups. The lowest ratings are, in fact, offered by Cantonese speakers who are average users of English language print media.

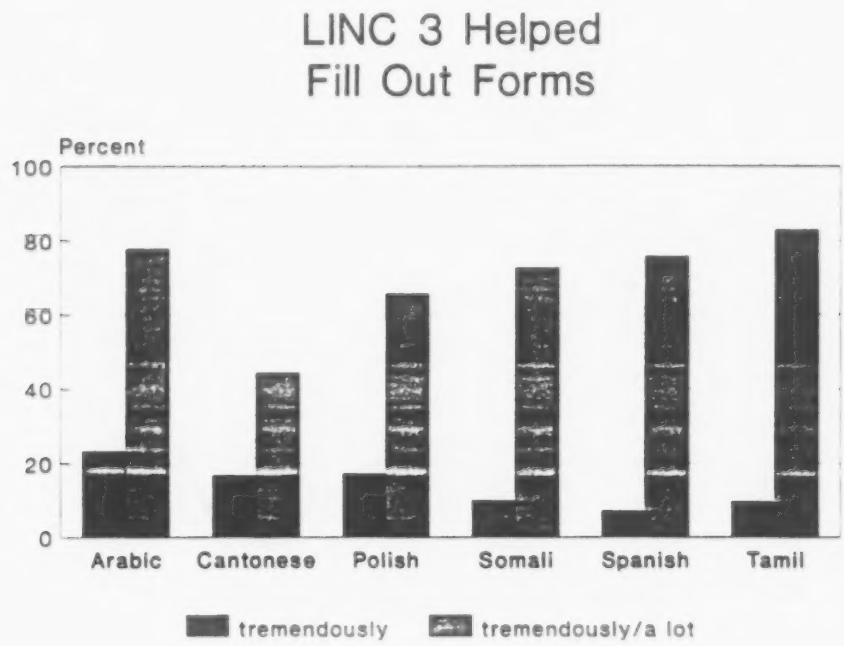
Figure 8.5



Literacy

'Filling out forms' was used throughout the short interview as a reference point for gauging use and difficulty with basic literacy skills in English. Respondents were asked to what extent completing LINC level 3 had been helpful in improving their ability to deal with forms. Large majorities in all language groups (with the exception of Cantonese) reported that LINC had been 'a lot' (or occasionally a 'tremendous amount') of help. A second question dealing with literacy asked respondents how helpful the LINC program had been in helping them improve their ability to write short notes; ratings of the usefulness of the LINC program are, on average, lower on this question.

Figure 8.6



Finally, overall ratings of the benefits of the LINC program are positive for all groups, with the exception of Polish graduates. As shown in Figure 8.7, large majorities rated the program as being at least 'a lot' of benefit to them.

Figure 8.7

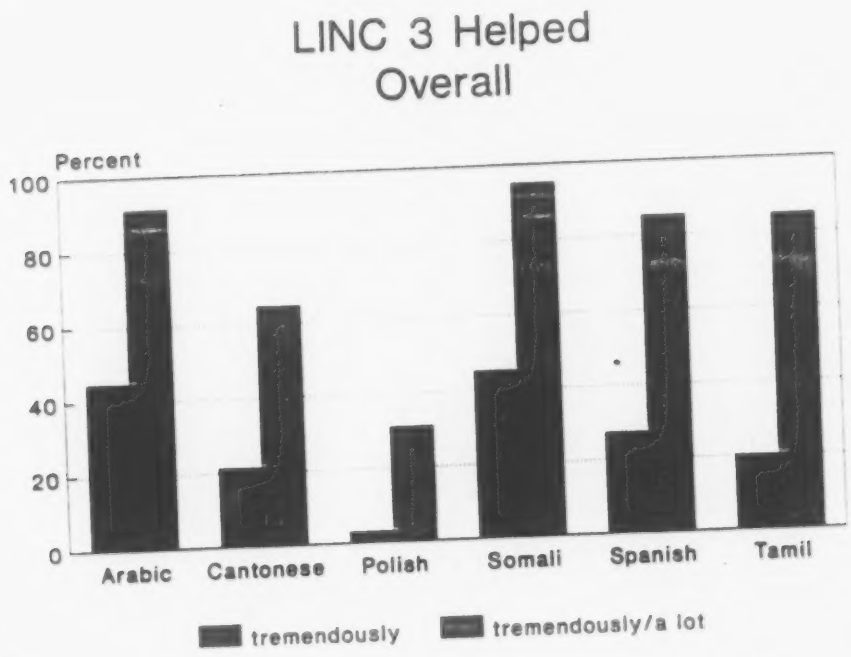


Table 8.1-8.6: How much, if at all, has completing level 3 of the LINC program helped you in each of the following areas?

Table 8.1: Arabic

	tremendously	a lot	a little	not at all	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Getting services						
Shopping	49.5	41.7	7.8	0.0	1.0	103
Getting medical services	38.8	49.5	10.7	0.0	1.0	103
Dealing with government agencies	29.1	41.7	22.3	3.9	2.9	103
Socializing						
Chatting with neighbours	43.7	42.7	7.8	2.9	2.9	103
Making acquaintances	34.0	15.5	45.6	3.9	1.0	103
Media use						
Reading English language newspapers	26.2	49.5	20.4	2.9	1.0	103
Watching TV and movies in English	27.2	64.1	6.8	1.0	1.0	103
Literacy						
Filling out forms	23.3	54.4	20.4	1.0	1.0	103
Writing short notes	15.5	28.2	45.6	9.7	1.0	103
Overall	44.7	46.6	7.8	1.0	0.0	103

Table 8.2: Cantonese

	tremendously	a lot	a little	not at all	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Getting services						
Shopping	21.6	31.3	40.4	5.8	1.0	208
Getting medical services	7.7	17.3	27.9	32.2	14.9	208
Dealing with government agencies	7.2	15.9	31.7	27.4	17.8	208
Socializing						
Chatting with neighbours	12.0	25.5	39.9	16.3	6.3	208
Making acquaintances	17.3	20.7	45.2	12.0	4.8	208
Media use						
Reading English language newspapers	10.1	19.7	49.5	15.9	4.8	208
Watching TV and movies in English	9.6	20.2	52.9	15.4	1.9	208
Literacy						
Filling out forms	16.8	27.4	47.1	8.2	0.5	208
Writing short notes	9.6	18.8	47.1	17.3	7.2	208
Overall	21.2	43.3	32.7	2.9	·0.0	208

Table 8.3: Polish

	tremendously	a lot	a little	not at all	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Getting services						
Shopping	21.7	41.9	32.8	2.5	1.0	198
Getting medical services	15.7	38.9	29.3	8.6	7.6	198
Dealing with government agencies	14.1	40.9	34.8	7.1	3.0	198
Socializing						
Chatting with neighbours	19.2	39.4	34.8	4.5	2.0	198
Making acquaintances	14.6	62.6	20.2	2.5	0.0	198
Media use						
Reading English language newspapers	13.1	48.5	32.8	3.5	2.0	198
Watching TV and movies in English	13.6	47.0	34.8	4.0	0.5	198
Literacy						
Filling out forms	17.2	49.0	31.3	2.0	0.5	198
Writing short notes	14.6	38.4	38.9	5.1	3.0	198
Overall	3.0	27.8	56.6	11.1	1.5	198

Table 8.4: Somali

	tremendously	a lot	a little	not at all	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Getting services						
Shopping	17.5	70.0	10.0	2.5	0.0	40
Getting medical services	15.0	60.0	25.0	0.0	0.0	40
Dealing with government agencies	22.5	60.0	17.5	0.0	0.0	40
Socializing						
Chatting with neighbours	25.0	62.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	40
Making acquaintances	22.5	62.5	15.0	0.0	0.0	40
Media use						
Reading English language newspapers	7.5	62.5	30.0	0.0	0.0	40
Watching TV and movies in English	25.0	62.5	12.5	0.0	0.0	40
Literacy						
Filling out forms	10.0	62.5	27.5	0.0	0.0	40
Writing short notes	5.0	45.0	45.0	5.0	0.0	40
Overall	45.0	50.0	5.0	0.0	0.0	40

Table 8.5: Spanish

	tremendously	a lot	a little	not at all	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Getting services						
Shopping	16.8	61.9	20.0	1.3	0.0	155
Getting medical services	9.7	52.9	32.9	3.9	0.6	155
Dealing with government agencies	7.1	41.3	36.1	13.5	1.9	155
Socializing						
Chatting with neighbours	12.9	64.5	20.6	1.9	0.0	155
Making acquaintances	11.6	61.9	24.5	1.3	0.6	155
Media use						
Reading English language newspapers	7.1	64.5	24.5	3.9	0.0	155
Watching TV and movies in English	5.8	67.1	25.8	1.3	0.0	155
Literacy						
Filling out forms	7.1	68.4	21.9	2.6	0.0	155
Writing short notes	9.0	60.0	26.5	4.5	0.0	155
Overall	27.1	58.1	14.8	0.0	0.0	155

Table 8.6: Tamil

	tremendously	a lot	a little	not at all	can't say	
	%	%	%	%	%	n
Getting services						
Shopping	12.8	65.8	18.4	0.0	3.1	196
Getting medical services	8.2	68.4	20.9	1.0	1.5	196
Dealing with government agencies	5.1	44.4	25.5	10.2	14.8	196
Socializing						
Chatting with neighbours	7.1	62.2	28.1	0.0	2.6	196
Making acquaintances	10.2	64.8	23.5	0.5	1.0	196
Media use						
Reading English language newspapers	6.1	56.6	35.2	1.0	1.0	196
Watching TV and movies in English	7.1	63.3	27.0	1.0	1.5	196
Literacy						
Filling out forms	9.7	73.0	16.3	0.5	0.5	196
Writing short notes	3.1	42.3	45.9	3.1	5.6	196
Overall	19.9	64.8	14.3	0.0	1.0	196

9. Findings from In-Depth Interviews[10]

We have synthesized findings from the in-depth interviews in respect to the topics or factors that respondents cited most frequently as: (a) facilitating and constraining their access to government, health and legal services; educational or training programs; employment opportunities; community and leisure opportunities; (b) benefits from LINC; (c) suggested changes to LINC; (d) their uses of and attitudes toward learning English; and (e) their future goals in Canada, as well as factors they perceive to facilitate or hinder their attaining these. We present these findings in summary form, based on tallies of the most frequently cited responses from the in-depth interviews and as verified among the interviewers in the research team for each ethnolinguistic group. Selected quotations from the interviews, translated into English, convey the qualities of people's responses. As described above, the data for these interviews were from 50 telephone interviews (10 each in Arabic, Cantonese, Polish, Spanish, and Tamil), but we were not able to obtain these data from Somali respondents.

Overall, the findings summarized below suggest that respondents to the in-depth interviews found their experiences in LINC helpful as an initial orientation to Canada and to learning English, but the program was brief and limited in scope. So they recognize now that they need to learn considerably more English (something most respondents have strong desires to do) in order to be able to find meaningful employment, which is most people's main personal goal for the coming years. They perceive this lack of English proficiency to be constraining their uses of English now in their daily lives, particularly to obtain government and health services, their opportunities for further education and work, and (less importantly for many) their interactions within their local communities. So they now tend to rely on friends and family members to assist them in these domains as well as ethnic and other community service agencies and certain public media such as TV and newspapers. In the future, however, they would like (and indeed expect) to be able to speak English with relative fluency. They see their fluency in English both as the major facilitating factor and major hinderance in their being able to achieve their personal goals for work, further education and raising their families in the coming years, although achieving these goals is contingent on other factors such as training or educational opportunities, work experience in Canada, and personal finances. Interestingly and in contrast to the short interviews, few differences emerged across

[10] Due to practical difficulties we were unable to complete in-depth interviews with Somali graduates.

the various ethnolinguistic groups surveyed on these matters; we have noted below the few differences that did appear. The reason for this is probably that all of the ethnolinguistic groups experience similar facilitating and constraining factors on their adaptation to Canada, which was the main issue addressed in the in-depth interviews. It is important to note that our data reflect the situations and perceptions only of people who have completed level 3 of LINC, and does not relate directly to people in, for example, levels 1 and 2 of the program.

Government, health and legal services

Most people reported that their uses of government, health and legal services were facilitated primarily by friends or family members in Ontario:

> I learned about how to get a social insurance card and things like that from friends.
>
> My family members have been here a long time. They help me to get everything done here. If it weren't for them, it would have taken me a long time to get things done, even simple things like getting a Metro pass.
>
> My husband helps me. He speaks English better than I do.
>
> My wife has been the most help. She knows the language and culture.

Many people remarked that they were assisted by specific ethnic community service agencies, and others by instructors or staff in LINC or other educational programs, by using public media such as TV or newspapers, or just by their acquiring more English:

> I think what has been most helpful to us is the TCCSA (Toronto Chinese Community Services Association). It's through them that I got registered in LINC... When we first came here we were sent a form to complete to appear in court. We did not know what was going on, and we did not know how to fill out the form. The English in the form was really difficult. The people at the TCCSA helped us. They were really great.
>
> The Polish Immigrant Centre has been helpful.
>
> I went to a social worker, who was very helpful. Also at the adult education centre, the other students and the teachers have been helpful.
>
> TV has really helped me. I watch TV most of the time. It helps me to get information. And it helps me improve my English.
>
> Learning more English has been most helpful. Newspapers have been useful too. I got lots of

information from them.

However, most people cited their limited proficiency in English, and resulting lack of self-confidence, as the major obstacle in their obtaining these services:

> English has been my obstacle. My English is limited, and when I want to get something done, I am afraid. I fear I cannot get it done.
>
> Sometimes bills come to be paid. I don't understand them. Sometimes my friends help, speaking slowly in English.

Many others described the lack of personal assistance or of interpreting services at government agencies as distinct obstacles:

> My mother just had surgery recently. When we were in the hospital, we had big communication problems. I think we should be able to hire interpreters so that they can interpret for us in the hospital.

Many people noted that they tended to obtain services from health professionals who speak their native languages, rather than trying to use English-speaking medical practitioners. Similarly, many people referred to doing their shopping in stores where people speak their languages: "I shop in Polish stores; the bank is the only place I need English". Indeed, the Polish and Cantonese respondents made frequent mention of this point, seemingly reflecting the long-standing establishment of services and businesses by speakers of these languages in certain parts of Ontario.

Some respondents observed that many government and health services probably exist in Ontario that they are still not aware of:

> I may just not know about some services. The only government services I know I get is the Health Card and LINC program. I don't know how the government here operates.
>
> I don't know if these services exist. I don't know where to go to find out.

Educational and training programs

Friends and family members were cited frequently as facilitating respondents' awareness of or entry into educational programs. People also frequently mentioned brochures, flyers, and TV announcements as informing them of these educational opportunities:

> I learn about these computer courses from some flyers and leaflets that advertise computer courses.
>
> The Polish newspapers have ads in them that help.

Similarly, libraries, immigration centres, colleges, school boards, and community centers were mentioned by some people as being helpful in informing them of further educational opportunities:

> I got information about these courses from the Board of Education, library, and Seneca College.
>
> I went to study ESL after I finished LINC. They have classes in the same school. I cannot take other courses now because I have to finish the ESL courses.

Nearly every respondent cited their limited English as the major constraining factor limiting their opportunities to pursue further education:

> My difficulty in getting into a computer course is mainly English. I need to improve my English first.
>
> I would like to get into any program that leads me to a specific job, like computers, accounting, or secretarial work. But I can't get into these programs because of my English and lack of experience in Canada.
>
> I need to improve my English before I can take any courses.

Others noted, however, that they lacked information about local resources or facilities:

> I would like to take courses in handicrafts, hairdressing, make-up, or design. But I don't know where to go.

Certain people mentioned needs for financial assistance in pursuing further education, noting such programs were not easily available to newcomers to Ontario. Some people (many Arabic- and Spanish-

speakers in particular) suggested that the government should provide more specific job-training programs:

> I would like to take more courses in mechanics. The government does not give help in this, though. There is no financial help for newcomers to get to new courses or continue our education.

Some also mentioned their family responsibilities or lack of money, time away from work, or transportation as constraints on their taking training courses. This difficulty seemed particularly prevalent among female respondents:

> Time is an obstacle. I have children to take care of.
>
> There are courses in business administration and computers that I would like to take, but I am studying full-time now from 9:00 to 4:00, and my child is in daycare only in the mornings.
>
> I thought about doing some realty courses to become a real estate agent. But money has been a problem. These courses cost over $2,000.
>
> I want to learn sewing. But I don't know where the classes are, and they are too far away. I can't go without a car.

Employment opportunities

As with government services and educational opportunities, most people described friends or family as the factor that primarily facilitated their employment opportunities; they then described their limited English as the major obstacle constraining such employment opportunities. Most people were adamant about the value of their network of friends or family in finding employment:

> Friends can help you a lot in finding jobs. They introduce you to jobs. They will tell you where vacancies are. Don't ever rely on employment agencies. They cannot help you.
>
> Because we are new immigrants and don't have local experience, we cannot find jobs easily. We must rely on our friends. They tell us where the jobs are. That's how I got my present job working as a housekeeping maid in a small motel.

Some people, particularly those with higher education or specific trades or professions, noted that their previous educational qualifications or work experiences in their native countries already qualified them for jobs in Ontario. Others, however, observed that they needed new courses in Ontario to validate

qualifications they already had, for example, "I need to take a course to revalidate my studies as a plumber." Many respondents suggested there should be better systems for assessing people's work qualifications or previous education from their native countries.

Some people found employment centres helpful:

> What has helped me most in getting jobs is going to the employment center, searching for jobs on the board or on the computer. Employment newspapers have helped too.

In contrast, others criticized the lack of assistance they received at employment centres:

> Employment centres do not provide sufficient information, advice or guidance. I don't feel I get services for employment because there is lack of advice or counselling.

> There are services I need but have not been able to get in applying for jobs. I would like to see qualified people to guide or assist us in evaluating our diplomas, preparing our resumes, advising us about opening small businesses, or just telling us what is right or wrong about applying for jobs.

Others observed how public media might help them find work, though few people we contacted actually reported obtaining employment in this way:

> You can also find some job ads in newspapers and free weekly leaflets. I think these can be useful in job searches.

> There are jobs that I would like to have, such as babysitting, companion to elderly people, or any kind of voluntary work. But I can't get these jobs because I am not well informed. I can't afford to buy newspapers for the ads.

Virtually every respondent observed how their limited English constrained the work opportunities they could seek:

> Office work is not for me because my English is not good enough for these jobs.

> I lack confidence because of my weak English. I need to improve my English to become more confident.

> I would consider secretarial work. But I know that is difficult. My English is not good enough. And you have to know people to get a job like that.

Others observed how their lack of English impinged on the training opportunities they could pursue, and as a consequence on their employment:

> The jobs I have considered are sewing and hairdressing. I have not taken these courses yet because I must first improve my English. My level of English is the only reason I am not doing these courses yet.

> I feel trapped between having to work to earn a living and continuing to study. Working full-time and studying at the same time is very hard.

Some people described how their lack of knowledge about business, legal, or other work conditions in Canada also hindered their employment opportunities:

> To start a small business, you really need to be able to read a contract correctly and know the local situation, the habits and trends of the clients. But English in business contracts is complicated, and I am afraid I will get cheated because I don't understand the language.

A further constraint on some areas of employment was noted to be lack of work experience in Canada or of job opportunities related to people's previous work experiences:

> Every time I ask for a job they want Canadian experience, which I don't have, and I haven't been able to get yet.

> I am putting in almost all my time getting experience in Canada so that I can get the kind of job as a welder that I want, and already have the qualifications for in Poland.

> I was a tea manufacturer for 25 years in Sri Lanka. I don't need new training for this. But here there is no tea manufacturing [in Ontario], so I can't work in this area.

An additional constraint for some was lack of transportation, particularly in areas outside of Toronto or for people without money to purchase a car. Others noted how the current economic conditions in Ontario or their present jobs constrained their finding the kinds of employment they would like:

> The economy is bad, and many other people are looking for jobs. I am there, trying to get a job as a new immigrant, and I am really disadvantaged. I really need to be able to speak the language.

> I haven't been able to get a job I would like because the job I have starts at midnight, and I don't have a car. So I am stuck with a night job and have no other time to look.

Social, community and leisure activities

The people we interviewed in-depth did not (like the larger sample in the short interviews), overall, seem to be engaged in very many social, community, or leisure activities outside of their homes or immediate families. In instances where people were active socially, they cited a range of sources that informed or facilitated their involvement, including religious or community organizations, recreation centers, LINC programs, friends or family, ethnic community groups, and brochures or flyers. For example:

> The LINC program is held in the Chinese Association of Mississauga. The association has been helpful, as other than LINC there are many activities they offer there. I am in the Karaoke class and the Cantonese opera class.
>
> I belong to a Polish soccer club. My friends told me about it.
>
> The things that have helped me most to get involved in these activities are Arabic newspapers, the community centre, my kids' school, and also members of the Arab Association.
>
> I do voluntary work also. We help people who are sick. When they can't talk English we help them, visiting hospitals or homes for seniors. There are some new immigrants and seniors who don't know how to behave in Canada. There is so much difference in our culture [Tamil]. We teach them ways of speaking and of behaving.

A distinct constraint on some people's engagement in such social activities appears to be lack of local knowledge about facilities or expectations:

> I don't know where I can take part in these activities. The only facility that I know is the swimming pool in the library on Dundas. I saw the pool. I saw people swimming there. And I found some leaflets saying that it's free. I have gone there several times after my English course. I swim there from 9:00 to 9:45 before I come home.
>
> I have only been here since 1995. I don't know a lot of people who would help inform me about these kinds of activities.

Many people also mentioned commitments to family, work or studies, or a lack of time or interest, as constraints on their leisure or community activities. Overall, most respondents seemed just too busy to be concerned about leisure or community activities:

> I don't participate in the community at all. I have a big family here, so I don't feel lonely.
>
> Time is an obstacle. It's difficult to tackle this problem. Maybe if I can find a better job and have more income, I can have more free time. Now I am spending a lot of the extra time that I do have on my courses.

> From 12:00 to 7:30 I have classes. I just don't have time for leisure outside my family other than special opportunities, like meetings twice a week for my job.

A few people we interviewed mentioned prejudices among Canadians as an obstacle to their participation in community activities, describing, for example, various lacks in mutual understanding:

> I feel the society rejects me because I am an Arab Muslim. English is not the problem. Canadians have prejudices.
>
> I would like to feel more integrated and have a better understanding of Canadian society. I would like to get involved socially but I don't know how to.
>
> I live in a seniors' house. The people here are not friendly.
>
> Language is a barrier to my doing social activities. I wouldn't understand them and they won't understand me.
>
> My son and I had a terrible experience with police officers. It was probably a communication problem. They said I was speeding. We stepped out of the car. My son acted as an interpreter, arguing on my behalf. We were really badly treated. Four other police officers rushed to us and ordered my son to step back and to raise his hands, as if we were criminals. I kept saying it was a misunderstanding, but they ignored my explanation. The way we were treated really scared me.

Benefits from LINC

When asked about the benefits they perceived receiving from LINC programs, respondents tended to mention three topics: learning basic aspects of English, particularly the spoken language and its grammar; obtaining information about Canadian society, customs and geography; and making friendships with classmates. Most respondents were very pleased with these aspects of LINC, particularly as an initial orientation to Canada and to spoken English:

> I think LINC gave me the basic essential English, enough to help me in looking for other English courses. It helped me take the very first step.
>
> I learned a lot about Canada. That was the time when Mike Harris was elected. I learned about the Canadian society, elections, qualifications for voting, and so on.
>
> Naturally I learned a lot of English from LINC. I learned a lot of vocabulary, which was very different from what I had learned in Hong Kong. I also talked and listened more.
>
> LINC also gives us a chance to meet other immigrant friends. The older people got together and formed a network, even outside of the class.

> My teachers were very, very helpful. The out-of-class experiences were very interesting, particularly tours to go shopping and to places like Centre Island. We made good friends in the classes.

Respondents were clear, however, to observe that LINC only provided them with a basic facility in English and orientation to Canada. They frequently noted their needs for further language training, continuity with training programs, and links to employment programs:

> LINC being helpful to me? I can tell you one thing. You learn a little English so that when you are on the street and someone asks you a question, you can give an answer. But then if the talk develops, you are stuck.

> There need to be assessment tests to verify when people are ready to go on to another level or different kind of program. I didn't think the assessments we were given were appropriate or very useful, particularly for doing something after completing LINC.

Suggested changes to LINC

Most respondents were satisfied with the experience they had in LINC, so did not suggest changes to the program, apart from wanting there to be further or more extensive opportunities for learning English made available to them. Other issues that were mentioned by some respondents as being worth changing in LINC included: decreasing the number and diversity of students in classes, providing more instruction on specific aspects of English (e.g., pronunciation, reading, idiomatic language, writing, grammar, etc.) and aspects of Canadian society and its political systems, improving the professional capacities of certain teachers, and improving the assessment procedures for placement into appropriate classes. For example:

> It's not easy to change the way LINC is. There are so many people who come to the program with different abilities and knowledge. It's hard to please everybody, so the teacher has to gear things toward the average abilities and needs in the class.

> It's difficult to make suggestions to improve LINC. The course is short and there are so many different ethnic groups in the program. It's difficult to make everyone happy.

> I think we should be taught more about social activities and skills. I want to know more about how to manage our daily lives, such as dealing with bank staff, communicating with them. I think we should have done more conversation. Take for example, at the supermarket - we don't even know what they sell at which department.

> I would like more vocabulary and topics about school, so that I can talk to the teachers of my children.
>
> Adding more levels to LINC would be very beneficial. It would help learners to improve their English to the level that they need, for example to Level 4 or 5.
>
> I encountered diverse instructors. I found it much more rewarding when there were young, dynamic teachers.

For reasons that are difficult to interpret within this subsample of our respondents, more Cantonese and Tamil respondents reported being more satisfied overall with their LINC experiences than did Arabic, Polish and Spanish respondents. Similarly, older respondents seemed more satisfied with their LINC experiences than younger respondents were. People's suggestions about LINC tended to focus on the delivery of instruction, and many program supports (such as childcare services or transportation subsidies), which were cited in other parts of the interviews (e.g., in reference to employment or other educational opportunities), seem to have been implicitly presumed in discussion with the interviewers.

Present uses of and attitudes toward learning English

We asked respondents to rate themselves on several scales we developed to describe: their current uses of English in their daily lives, the comfort they felt themselves gaining in learning English, whether they avoided using English, whether they enjoy learning English, and their long-term aims for fluency in English.

Most respondents acknowledged that most days "they use English in short conversations with several people, doing things like asking questions and understanding the answers". A few people, most of whom were employed in English-speaking jobs, said most days they "use English at least half of the time".

The respondents ranged in their perceptions of their comfort in English, most saying that "50% of the time" they feel comfortable in English, some saying they "always" do, and some saying they do only "sometimes". These figures indicate that most of the respondents think they are making progress in learning and using English. Almost all of the respondents stated they do not try to avoid using English, though some said they do "sometimes". Nearly everyone said they enjoyed learning English, either "always" or at least "50% of the time". Almost everyone interviewed described their long-term goals for learning English as either to be "fluent enough that you make very few errors in your use of English, but

no one would think it was your first language" or to have "sufficient fluency to work at a job in English even if you make a lot of errors in use of English".

Future goals and factors facilitating or constraining them

When asked about their personal goals for the next five years, most people described wanting to get a satisfying job. Many cited becoming fluent in English (either as a goal itself or a facilitating factor in their finding work and settling comfortably in Canada), and some people cited raising their families well, pursuing further education or training, becoming financially secure, buying houses or cars, or travelling. For example:

> My goal is to find a job I like and speak English.
>
> My goal for the next five years is to learn English well and to find a job that I can accept. I want to rear my two sons properly. I want them to be good young persons and I want them to go to university. To achieve these goals I must go to school and study English hard.
>
> Of course I meet hindrances in learning English. English itself IS the hinderance. I meet words that I don't know, and I just have to tackle them.
>
> My goals are to learn English, master the language, and get to university.

Fluency in English loomed large in these discussions; it was the chief factor mentioned, both as a facilitating and a constraining factor, on people's perceptions of their being able to achieve these goals. Other factors that were cited included: personal effort or self-confidence, personal finances, further education, help from family, job-training courses (e.g., in computers, math, etc.), experience working in Canada, assistance with childcare, and interpreting services. For example:

> I think the first hinderance to achieving my goals is my lack of confidence. Sometimes I feel that I learn a lot, but then I forget a lot too. This is especially true when I am learning English.
>
> What would help me the most would be to be able to get my daughters into daycare so that I have some free time, to have money to be able to pay for university studies, and to be able to speak English well.
>
> The computer, math and English classes I am taking now are very helpful. They should prepare me for a good job.
>
> The biggest hindrance is lack of work experience in Canada. I need to get this experience to be able to get a good job. I wish LINC had been able to direct me toward more practical training for work.

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Appendix 1.

LINC Short Interview

Hello, my name is xxxx. I'm calling on behalf of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, which is part of the University of Toronto. I'm contacting you because you are a graduate of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada program - LINC. We are trying to talk to as many Ontario graduates as possible to find out how people do after they leave the LINC program. We are under contract to do this survey for Citizenship Canada, the part of the federal government that provides LINC programs.

We hope you will take the 10 minutes or so we need for this interview. You are, of course, free to refuse now, or at any time during the interview. However, if many people refuse to be interviewed our survey may not give a true picture of how LINC graduates are doing. What you say to us will be kept strictly confidential. We will be reporting only results for large groups of graduates, not for individuals; your name will never be used. We are not evaluating any one LINC course, but rather looking at the whole program in Ontario.

The questions I'd like to ask you have to do with the languages you use to do different activities and any problems you have had in using English. I would like to know whether you've had any problems with some activities due to language. At the end of the interview I'll ask a few questions about your background, for example, your age and education.

For most questions I will read you a list of options; you just have to choose one of these.

Are you willing to do this short 10 minute interview?

A. Languages Used for Everyday Activities

My first questions are about buying goods and obtaining services.

1. Over the past three months, how frequently have you dealt with each of the following in any language:

   not at all
   less than once a month
   at least once a month
   at least once a week

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	can't say
Staff of local supermarkets					
doctors and nurses					
pharmacists					
staff of a bank branch					
landlords or real estate agents					
staff of social agencies or government offices					

2. Over the past three months, have you communicated with each of the following in English: not at all, sometimes, about 50 percent of the time or always?

	Not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	can't say
Staff of local supermarkets					
doctors and nurses					
pharmacists					
staff of a bank branch					
landlords or real estate agents					
staff of social agencies or government offices					

3. Over the past three months, has using English caused you difficulties in communicating with each of the following: not at all, sometimes, 50 percent of the time or always?

	Not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	can't say
Staff of local supermarkets					
doctors and nurses					
pharmacists					
staff of a bank branch					
landlords or real estate agents					
staff of social agencies or government offices					

4a. When you deal with social agencies or government offices, how often do you have someone interpret for you?

___ not at all ___ sometimes ___ 50 percent of the time ___ always

IF NOT AT ALL, SKIP TO QUESTION 5

4b. How often did the social agency or government office provide you with an interpretor?

___ not at all ___ sometimes ___ 50 percent of the time ___ always

The next questions have to do with work and looking for work.

5. Did you hold a job anytime over the past three months?

___ Yes ___ No --IF NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 8.

The next questions ask about your use of English at work in your current job, or in your last job if you are not working right now.

6. Over the past three months, have you used English in your current job or your last job for each of the following activities: not at all, sometimes, 50 percent of the time or always?

	Not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	Can't say
Speaking with your boss					
Speaking with other employees					
Speaking with clients or customers					
Reading messages, forms and health warnings					

7. Over the past three months, has using English in your current job or your last job caused you difficulties in doing each of the following activities: not at all, sometimes, 50 percent of the time or always?

	Not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	Can't say
Speaking with your boss					
Speaking with other employees					
Speaking with clients or customers					
Reading messages, forms and health warnings					

8. Have you looked for a new job anytime in the past three months?

___ Yes ___ No —IF NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 12.

9. Over the past three months, have you used English in doing each of the following activities: not at all, sometimes, 50 percent of the time or always?

	not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	Can't say
Reading help wanted ads in newspapers or at employment agencies					
Filling out application forms					
Being interviewed by employers					

10. Over the past three months, has using English caused you difficulties in doing each of the following activities: not at all, sometimes, 50 percent of the time or always?

	not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	Can't say
Reading help wanted ads in newspapers or at employment agencies					
Filling out application forms					
Being interviewed by employers					

11. How often, if at all, do you think you were not hired for a job mainly because of your English? [READ SCALE]

___ not at all ___ sometimes ___ about half the time ___ always

The next questions are about education and schools.

12. Have you attended school or taken any training programs since graduating from the LINC program where English was the language of instruction?

___ Yes ___ No --IF NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 15.

13. What was this program?

_____

14. Over the past three months, has using English caused you difficulties in doing each of the following activities: not at all, sometimes, 50 percent of the time or always?

	not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	Can't say
Filling out forms for the school or program					
Reading printed material such as textbooks or tests					
Understanding and speaking to your instructor					

15. Do you deal with the school system as a parent or on behalf of anyone else in your family with a child in school?

____ Yes ____ No --IF NO, SKIP TO QUESTION 17.

16. Over the past three months, has using English caused you difficulties in doing each of the following activities: not at all, sometimes, 50 percent of the time or always?

	not at all	sometimes	50 percent of the time	always	Can't say
Filling out forms for the school					
Understanding letters and notices from the school					
Meeting with teachers and other school staff					

The next set of questions have to do with leisure activities.

17. Please tell me **how often** you do each of the following **in your first language** and in **English**: not at all, less than once a month, at least once a month, at least once a week, at least once a day.

	not at all	less than once a month	at least once a month	at least once a week	at least once a day
Read newspapers and magazines in your first language.					
in English					
Read books in your first language					
in English					
Listen to radio and watch television in your first language.					
in English					
Go to community or religious gatherings in your first language					
in English					
Participate in hobby clubs, sports teams or cultural organizations in your first language.					
in English					

B. Views of the LINC Program

The next set of questions ask about your views of the LINC program.

18a. When did you graduate at level 3 from the LINC program?

_____ month _____ year

18b. How many months did you spend in the LINC program at level 3?

____ months

18c. How many months, if any, did you spend altogether at levels 1 and 2?

____ months

19. How much, if at all, has completing level 3 of the LINC program helped to you in each of the following areas. Please tell me if it has helped:

1. tremendously
2. a lot
3. a little
4. not at all

	termendously	a lot	a little	not at all	Can't say
Shopping					
Chatting with neighbours					
Getting medical services					
Dealing with government agencies					
Reading English language newspapers					
Watching TV and movies in English					
Filling out forms					
Writing short notes or letters.					
Making acquaintances who do not speak your first language.					

20. Overall, how much did the LINC program benefit you?

1. tremendously
2. a lot
3. a little
4. not at all

D. Background

I have a few final questions about your background.

21. What is your age group?

1. 18 - 19
2. 20 - 24
3. 25 - 34
4. 35 - 44
5. 45 - 54
6. 55+

22. What is your country of birth? _____

23. What is your marital status?

1. never married — If NEVER MARRIED SKIP TO QUESTION 28
2. married
3. divorced/separated — IF DIVORCED/WIDOWED SKIP TO QUESTION 25
4. widowed —

24. Do you share a residence with a spouse?

___ Yes ___ No

25. Do you have children under age 18?

___ Yes ___ No — IF NO SKIP TO QUESTION 28

26. Do any of your children under 18 reside with you?

___ Yes ___ No — IF NO SKIP TO QUESTION 28.

27. What language do you mainly use in speaking to your children?

____ your first language
____ English
____ both about equally

28. How many years have you attended school? ____ years

29. What is the highest level of schooling you have obtained?

[DO NOT READ SCALE]

1. primary or elementary only
2. some high school
3. graduated from high school
4. some university
5. some college or similar
6. university degree
7. college diploma or similar

30. Are you currently employed? ____ yes ____ no

31. What is you current job or the last job you held in Canada?

_____

OR ____ Not worked in Canada

32. What was the main job you had in your country of citizenship before leaving?

_____

Thank you for this interview.

Would you be willing to talk to us again about you experiences after graduating from the LINC program? In the next month, we are going to be interviewing a small number of respondents to this survey in more detail about their experience in Canada and with LINC.

___ yes ___ no

Appendix 2.

LINC IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS: FINAL VERSION

Points for Introduction

- Reminder of earlier short survey and their willingness at that time to participate in a longer interview.
- Purpose of this interview is to ask more in-depth questions about their experience for which there wasn't time in the earlier survey.
- We're interested in their experiences, good and bad, in adapting to life in Canada, particularly as these relate to use of English.
- The interview will take about 30 minutes; the interview will be taped.
- As with the short interview, their anonymity is guaranteed; no report will use their name or in anyway allow them to be identified. We are not the government; no information on individuals will be released to anyone.
- The purpose of the project is to study how the LINC program helps or could better help people adapt to life in Canada.
- The interview will start by asking interviewees about what helps and hinders them in different areas of life: for example, getting the services they need or getting a job. We will then ask about the interviewees' goals and what things will help them or will hinder them in reaching these goals.

Are you willing to continue with this interview? ___ Yes ___ No

My first questions are about use of services, for example, from government, the health care system, the legal system or other areas.

1a. Up to now, what if anything, has been the most help to you in getting the services you need from government, the health care system, the legal system or other areas?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

1b. Are there any services which you feel you need but have not been able to get?

___ Yes >> Skip to Q. 1d.
___ No

1c. Are there any areas where you feel you need more services than you are getting now?

___ Yes
___ No >> Skip to Q. 2a.

1d. What are these services?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three activities cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

1e. Why aren't you able to get these services now?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three reasons cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]
[Probe: If problems with English are not mentioned, ask "Has needing to use English been a problem in getting these services?"]

1f. What would be most useful in helping you overcome your difficulties in getting the services you need?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

The next questions are about educational and training programs.

2a. Up to now, what if anything, has been most helpful to you in getting into training or educational programs you wanted? If you haven't taken these programs yet, is there anything which has helped you get closer to being able to take them?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

2b. Are there educational and training programs you have not taken but would like to take within the next two years?

___ Yes >> Skip to Q. 2d.
___ No

2c. Have you thought about any educational or training programs you might like to take?

___ Yes
___ No >> Skip to Q. 3a.

2d. What are these programs?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three programs cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

2e. Why haven't you been able to take these programs?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three reasons cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]
[Probe: If problems with English are not mentioned, ask "Has needing to use English been a problem in doing any of these activities?"]

2f. What would be most useful in helping you overcome your difficulties in taking these programs?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

The next questions are about jobs.

3a. Up to now what has been the most help to you in getting the kinds of jobs you want? (If you haven't yet got the kind of job you want, is there anything which has helped you get closer to getting such jobs?)

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

3b. Is there a particular kind of job or career that you would like to have, but haven't been able to get into so far?

___ Yes >> Skip to Q. 3d.
___ No

3c. Have you thought about any job or career you might like to have, that is different from what you are doing now?

___ Yes
___ No >> Skip to Q. 4a.

3d. What kinds of jobs are these?

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: If less than three activities cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

3e. Why haven't you been able to get these kinds of jobs?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three reasons cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]
[Probe: If problems with English are not mentioned, ask "Has needing to use English been a problem in doing any of these activities?"]

3f. What would be most useful in helping you overcome your difficulties in getting these kinds of jobs?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

I now want to ask you about your participation in social, community and leisure activities.

4a. Up to now, what has been the most help to you in getting involved in social, community or leisure activities outside the home?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

4b. Now thinking about your participation social, community or leisure activities outside the home, are there activities you would like to do but aren't doing now?

___ Yes >> Skip to Q. 4d.
___ No

4c. Are there social, community or leisure activities you would like to do more often than you do now?

___ Yes
___ No >> Skip to Q. 4f.

4d. What are these activities?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three activities cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

4e. Why aren't you doing these activities now?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three reasons cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]
[Probe: If problems with English are not mentioned, ask "Has needing to use English been a problem in doing any of these activities?"]

4f. What would be most useful in helping you overcome your difficulties in doing these activities?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

The next questions have to do with the LINC program.

5a. **You graduated from the LINC program some time ago. Looking back now, what do you think were the things about the program that have helped you the most since you graduated?**

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: **If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]**

5b. **What changes to the program do you think would have made it more useful to you after you graduated?**

1._____

_____

2._____

_____

3._____

_____

[Probe: **If less than three factors cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]**

For the next set of questions are about using English. You just have to indicate which of the answers I'll read to you is closest to your situation.

6a. Overall, which of the following statements best describes how much English you have to use most days to do what you want to do? [READ ALL OPTIONS BEFORE ACCEPTING A RESPONSE.]

a. Most days I don't need to use any English at all.

b. Most days I need to use just a little English, like saying "yes" and "no".

c. Most days I need to use English in short conversations with several people, doing things like asking questions and understanding the answers.

d. Most days I need to use English at least half the time.

e. Most days I need to use English almost all the time.

6b. As I read each of the following statements, please tell me if the statement is:

___ how you always feel
___ how you feel about 50% of the time
___ how you feel sometimes
___ not how you feel at all

A. I am becoming more and more comfortable doing things in English.

B. I would like to get through most days without having to use much English.

C. I enjoy learning how to do more and more things in English.

6c. Which of the following is closest to the level of English fluency that you would personally be satisfied with for yourself?

___ The English fluency most students have when they graduate from the LINC program at level 3.
___ Sufficient fluency to work at a job in English even if you make a lot of errors in use of English.
___ Fluent enough that you make very few errors in your use of English, but no one would think it was your first language.
___ Fluent enough so that many people would think English was your first language.

My last questions are about your goals, and what you think will help and what will hinder you in reaching them?

7a. Personally, what are your goals for the next five years?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three goals cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

7b. What will help you the most in trying to reach these goals?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three goals cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

7c. What will hinder you the most in trying to reach these goals?

1. _____

_____

2. _____

_____

3. _____

_____

[Probe: If less than three goals cited, ask "Is there anything else?"]

[Probe: If English is not mentioned under helps or hindrances, ask "How does improving your English language skills fit into reaching your goals, or is this not important?]

THANK YOU FOR THIS INTERVIEW